

VOLUME 17 ISSUE 1 | WINTER 2023

*in*FOCUS

QUARTERLY

Agenda for a New Congress



Seth Cropsey on How Congress Can Shape Foreign Policy | **Stephen D. Bryen** on China's Security Challenge | **Adam Milstein** on Combatting Antisemitism | **Lauri B. Regan** and **Sarah Stern** on Congress's Israel Opportunity | **Peter Huessy** on Nuclear Modernization | **Eric Rozenman** on Defunding Public Broadcasting | **Daren Bakst** and **Richard Stern** on the Inflation Reduction Act | **Katy Talento** on Healthcare Policy | **Jonathan Tobin** on Securing the Border | **Matt DeLisi**, **John Paul Wright**, and **Rafael Mangual** on Crime Policy | **Shoshana Bryen** reviews *Indispensable Nation*

Featuring an Interview with Former Senator **Norm Coleman**

LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

Here it comes: the 118th Congress of the United States.

Every time a new Congress is sworn in, America's hopes rise. Maybe THIS time our representatives will actually represent us, not their own desires and predilections. Maybe THIS time the Senate will again deserve the title, "The World's Greatest Deliberative Body."

The Winter 2023 issue of *inFOCUS* Quarterly is our set of priorities for Congress. Things we hope it will do, things we hope it won't – and we know ours will compete with the priorities of others. Our goal, as always, is a country with generally less government interference and less government spending – but able to defend America, its interests, and its allies in a complicated world. It is a tall order.

Start with former Senator Norm Coleman. His interview provides the framework for everything else.

For the JPC, American security is paramount. But our aging nuclear force and the increasing belligerence of China raise the threat level considerably. Defense strategy is covered by Seth Cropsey, Peter Huessy, and Stephen Bryen. Inflation tops the list of public polling concerns; Daren Bakst and Richard Stern want Congress to fix the Inflation Reduction

Act. Health care ranks high, and Katy Talento presents a series of fixes to make it less expensive and more transparent. Jonathan Tobin wants Congress to act on illegal immigration, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting is the purview of Eric Rozenman. Crime as an "entitlement" is the thesis of Matt DeLisi, John Paul Wright, and Rafael A. Mangual.

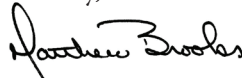
As a Jewish organization, our priority list includes the threat of antisemitism to the American way of life and continuing congressional support for U.S.-Israel security cooperation as an American defense priority. Adam Milstein, Sarah Stern and

Lauri B. Regan make the case.

Robert J. Lieber's new book, *Indispensable Nation: American Foreign Policy in a Turbulent World*, is reviewed by Shoshana Bryen. If not us, who? If not now, when?

If you appreciate what you've read, I encourage you to make a contribution to the Jewish Policy Center. As always, you can use our secure site: <http://www.jewishpolicycenter.org/donate>

Sincerely,



Matthew Brooks
Publisher



inFOCUS
VOLUME 17 | ISSUE 1

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Published by:
Jewish Policy Center
PO Box 77316
Washington, DC 20013.

(202) 638-2411

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Cover art: Nicolas Raymond

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How Congress Can Remedy Disastrous Biden Strategy

by **SETH CROPSEY**

The Biden administration published its National Security Strategy in mid-October. The document epitomizes what is wrong, intellectually, and strategically, with the current administration's strategic perspective. Its greatest failure is the securitization of all topics with no attendant focus on any given strategic question. While the Biden administration faces a crisis across Eurasia that is close to drawing the U.S. into active warfare, it has engaged itself intellectually in a public-facing task with no actual substance. The National Defense Strategy, published shortly after the National Security Strategy, simply reinforces the former document's follies.

The Biden administration may be derelict in its duty to secure America's defenses. However, Congress can act strategically, that is, compel the administration to accept a more coherent defense posture and advocate the capabilities and budgets the military actually requires. This would be well within the legislative branch's constitutional role, and entirely apt given the current situation.

■ *National Strategic Theater*

Congress requires every administration to publish a National Security Strategy, but the document released by the administration is the apex of strategic bureaucratization. It is not a defense strategy, nor is it a grand strategy. It is, rather, a messaging exercise primarily for domestic audiences.

In one sense, the National Security Strategy, like many of its predecessor documents, says little about an administration's actual policy. This document is jam-packed with priorities

from countering China and Russia to mitigating climate change and ensuring American resilience.

Nevertheless, the structure of the Biden National Security Strategy does point to a strategic hermeneutic, a set of assumptions about the world, its major actors, and its critical dynamics that are useful to those who seek to understand policy. Four elements are relevant. All of them point to a lack of seriousness, and more fundamentally, to a lack of strategic change since the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

First, the National Security Strategy is an ideological manifesto, not a realistic look at, for lack of a better word, the security elements of Eurasian competition. It begins with the same rhetoric that has become commonplace in any administration's national security strategy—the world is “more dangerous” than at any

threats. The U.S. must compete and cooperate simultaneously. The climate disaster and public health questions, even inflation issues are worthy of consideration and relevant to a security assessment. Of course, there is an overlap between climate, inflation, health, and other questions and a nation's broader strategy. But a security strategy is the wrong venue in which to discuss, for example, climate adaptation or an anti-inflationary policy. If every issue is a security issue, none is.

■ *“Integrated Deterrence”*

Second, the National Security Strategy demonstrates the degree to which the Biden administration does not see current Eurasian competition as military competition. The focus on “nontraditional security issues” dovetails with the Biden administration's doctrine of “integrated deterrence.” The National Security

Congress requires every administration to publish a National Security Strategy, but the document released by the administration is the apex of strategic bureaucratization. It is not a defense strategy, nor is it a grand strategy. It is, rather, a messaging exercise primarily for domestic audiences.

previous point, yet the United States retains an “enduring role,” with its strategy's precepts remaining as sound as they were 10, 20, or 50 years ago. The notable aspect, however, is the explicit equivalence between traditional and nontraditional

Strategy defines it as “combining our strengths” to deter America's adversaries. This concept looks much like “smart power,” the Obama administration's doctrine that combined diplomacy and military action to achieve American interests—in



Candidate Joe Biden speaks about foreign policy in Davenport, IA in 2019. (Photo: Adam Schultz / Biden for President)

other words statecraft. Much like smart power, integrated deterrence appears to be a meaningless term with no relevance to the national security professional or interested citizen. In reality, it is a strategic dog whistle to Biden's political allies that the administration does not prioritize conventional deterrence and warfighting capacity. Integrated deterrence serves to create justifications to cut and reorient defense spending and traditional military means in favor of domestic policy priorities.

This points to the third issue, the Biden administration's supposed conviction that American economic resilience is the foundation of national power. In the abstract this claim is undeniable: Economic power is the wellspring of military strength. Yet it is no longer 1945 or 1960. The United States must

apply its power with care and prudence. Instead, the Biden administration has dressed up climate handouts as an anti-inflationary measure. The lost art of Net Assessment—the art of strategy—can be understood as compelling or inducing an opponent to take steps in one's own interest. The Biden administration has triggered and sustained an inflationary crisis and concurrently introduced a defense strategy that will hollow out U.S. military capacity. The administration's point is to justify reducing American military strength because it sees competition as a complex concatenation of diverse causes.

Fourth, the administration's refusal to recognize Iran as a legitimate strategic threat reveals its unwillingness to recognize tangible competition and adapt to new circumstances. The Biden team still clings to the chimerical Obama-era

dream of a regional realignment, in which Israel and Saudi Arabia were humbled, and Iran elevated. The U.S. recently bullied Israel into conceding its maritime space to Hezbollah, and by extension to Iran. "Regional integration" empowers Iran at the expense of Israel and the Gulf Arabs. All this while Iran provides Russia with weapons to strike targets throughout Ukraine. Although the new Iran nuclear deal may be dead for now as protests surge in the self-styled Islamic Republic, it will return when the news media conditions have shifted.

■ **National Defense Strategy**

The National Defense Strategy simply doubles down on the National Security Strategy's mistakes. Indeed, it offers slightly greater clarity as to the military meaning of Integrated Deterrence.

The military has five tasks, the first two of which, protect critical infrastructure and prevent a nuclear strike on the U.S. homeland, have either very little to do with the military, or very little to do with the current strategic balance – despite bluff and bluster, China and Russia are not on the cusp of attacking the U.S. with nuclear weapons. Third on the priorities list is what was termed, in an earlier age, conventional deterrence, the ability to prevent adversaries from actually acting decisively to modify the strategic balance by capturing key territories.

In turn, the Defense Department will emphasize “campaigning,” a concept that essentially reduces to “conducting daily actions with a vague strategic purpose in peacetime.” Why the word “campaigning?” To convince the casual reader that the Defense Department is engaged in a robust competition and knows it and avoid the obvious reality that the United States is completely unready for a major conflict.

■ *Congress and Defense Policy*

A more sensible National Security Strategy would have begun with a recognition of the current geopolitical situation: the struggle for Eurasian mastery that involves the U.S., China, Russia, Iran, and the various secondary powers throughout the landmass. American strategy has a singular objective, to preserve the extant Eurasian security sys-

Russia spoils the global food and energy supply. China pressures Taiwan. Xi Jinping is installed as Maximum Leader. Iranian weapons supply Russian forces, and Chinese technology likely assists their development.

The Biden administration’s diffuse and domestically focused response is inadequate and dangerous.

Congress cannot make foreign policy wholesale. But it can, through prudent, aggressive action steer the ship of state on the course it ought to take.

The advantage of the federal system, with its separation of powers, is that it provides multiple avenues of policy oversight. Only the executive branch can fight a war. Modern Americans have forgotten that the very purpose of the presidency, with its sweeping powers, unitary nature, and dictatorial character, was to allow it to act with dispatch and secrecy. Hence the president has broad latitude in matters of statecraft, that is, when he employs military force or diplomatic elements to further American interests.

This latitude is not sacrosanct, however, when one shifts to long-term discussions of strategy or force structure. It is Congress that approves the budgets for

constructive manner on military questions at previous points in U.S. history. Most notably, before the Second World War, Carl Vinson spearheaded the 1938 Naval Act, increasing Navy fighting strength by 20 percent, and then the 1940 Two-Ocean Navy Act, which kick-started American defense industrial production and provided the Navy with the fighting

core it would need during the Pacific War.

In today’s context, there are five concrete steps that Congress can take to improve America’s ability to confront a major Eurasian military challenge.

■ *Right-Size the Force*

First, Congress can right-size the force. Expanding the services provides a strategic reserve of trained manpower. As the Russo-Ukrainian War demonstrates, modern combat remains brutal and casualties high. Ensuring that all Services meet their annual recruiting targets at minimum is a military necessity. Even more reasonable, however, would be to expand the Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force’s top-line personnel numbers to ensure that they can sustain damage and keep fighting. In turn, remaining restrictions on new recruits should be re-evaluated, particularly those that disqualify potential soldiers for “crimes” that are now legal.

Second, Congress can compartmentalize funding *in toto* for strategic reinvestment. It is not only the military services and Pentagon that will demand new funds. The Biden administration’s national strategies are, once again, veiled excuses to raid the defense budget. The executive, ventriloquizing the services and employing pressure from the Democratic Party’s left, will seek to

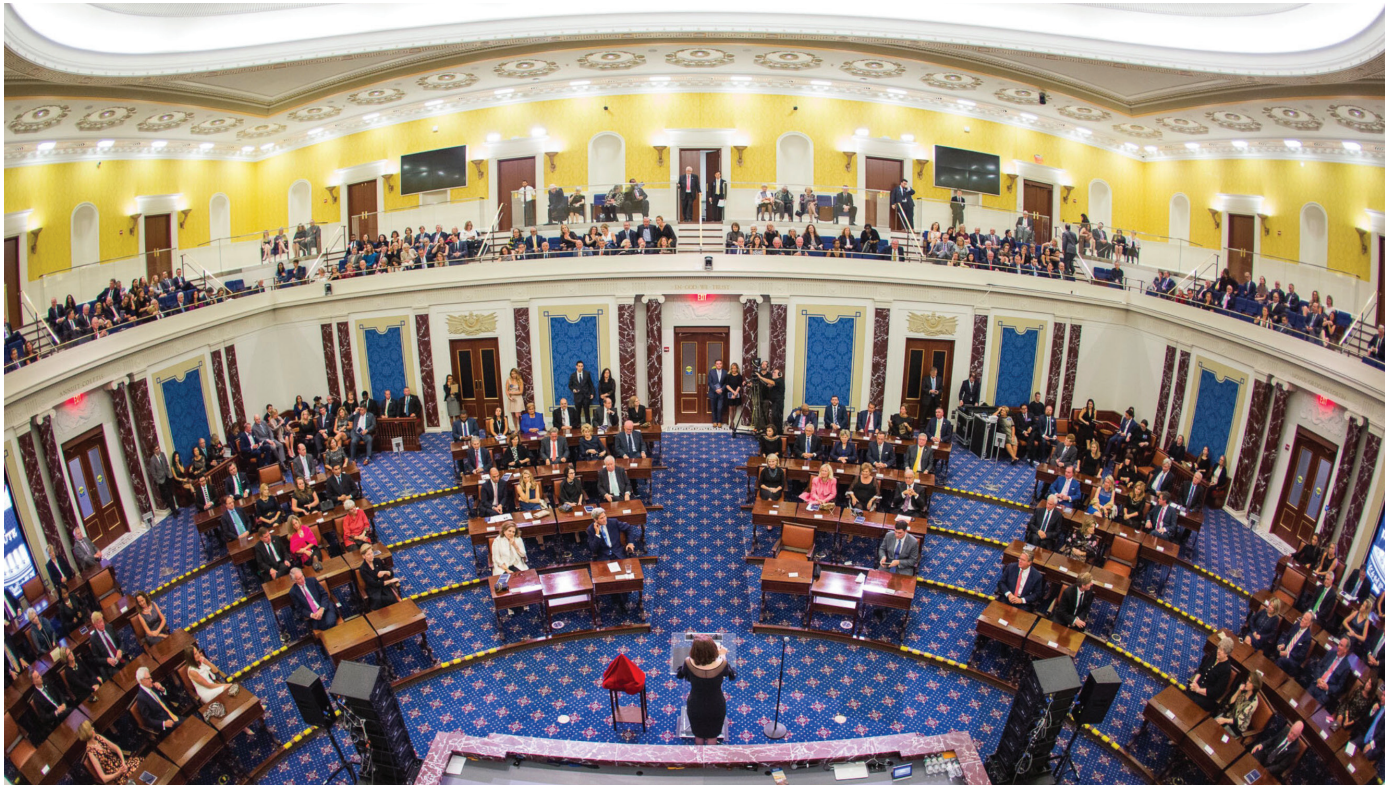
Congress can compartmentalize funding *in toto* for strategic reinvestment.

tem and counter Chinese, Russian, and Iranian attempts to overturn it. This requires all elements of national power, but most specifically military. America’s adversaries pose a military threat and seek to achieve their goals by military means.

The Biden administration does face a dangerous world. Russia makes nuclear threats. The war in Ukraine drags on.

the military, and Congress that scrutinizes and holds to account American generals and admirals during wartime. The legislature has a constitutional right to impose its strategic concepts upon the executive so long as individual senators and representatives are not directing military operations.

Congress has taken the lead in a



The U.S. Senate (Photo: Eric Haynes)

siphon off as much cash as possible. Some of the endeavors the Biden administration proposes will be reasonable, particularly those that ensure the U.S. has access to specific sovereign capabilities, like semiconductor fabrication facilities, that it can employ during a major conflict. Yet the competition America faces requires a significantly enlarged defense budget, something around at least seven percent of GDP instead of the current approximately three percent.

■ **Strategy**

Third, Congress can provide the services with the support they need to think about strategy. The services, barring arguably the Marines, are listless, with little understanding of their role in modern combat. Contrary to the still-fashionable demands of Jointness, it is far more intellectually reasonable to begin with the services. Strategic thought requires new blood – this will be found far from the Joint Staff and standard military-operational structures, and particularly within the services themselves. Congress can oversee the revitalization of actual service

strategic cultures. Of equal importance, Congress can expand those who participate in actual strategic thought, linking with think-tanks and academia far more effectively than today to ensure more comprehensive military thinking.

Fourth, Congress can revitalize the Defense Industrial Base. This demands far more than simplistic industrial strategies. Rather, it requires supporting smaller defense providers; incentivizing the development of dual-use technologies, particularly in unmanned contexts; reducing regulatory barriers for defense collaboration; and subsidizing various forms of training, particularly for large industrial production and repair of warships. Over time, automation will improve efficiency and displace human labor, but during the current Sino-American competition, manual labor and traditional productivity will remain crucial.

Fifth, Congress can properly fund two critical partly military capacities, a proper logistics system and a more robust space industry. The U.S. military lacks the sealift capacity to sustain itself in combat. Its sealift capabilities rest

on a far broader foundation, however, than just military assets. The U.S. relies upon the Merchant Marine to conduct resupply missions during a major war. Much like America's satellite system, the Merchant Marine is sufficient for peacetime, but not for wartime. Both require a funding injection and explicit government support.

■ **Conclusion**

Congress cannot make foreign policy wholesale. But it can, through prudent, aggressive action steer the ship of state on the course it ought to take. Congressional actions like those outlined above can push back against the Biden administration's attempted erosion of traditional deterrence and military capacities, and ensure the United States is prepared for a Sino-American war.

SETH CROUSEY, a former naval officer, is President of the Yorktown Institute. He previously served as Deputy Undersecretary of the Navy and acting Assistant Secretary of Defence for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict.

U.S. Security at Risk as China Exploits American Technology

by **STEPHEN BRYEN**

The U.S. Department of Defense has published its 2022 version of “Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China.” But the Pentagon fails to explain how American technology is aiding and abetting China’s increasingly powerful and technologically advanced military and makes no useful suggestions as to how the U.S. can respond. Unless concrete measures are taken soon, American security will be increasingly at risk as China deploys sophisticated weapons at home and sells them to its foreign friends.

The report suggests that espionage activities against America began in 2015, although there is plenty of evidence it has been going on for decades. The review does not mention that China’s stealth technology was acquired in part by a massive cyber-theft operation. There is no discussion of the infiltration of American universities and top research organizations and laboratories by Chinese “students” or “researchers,” or how U.S. institutions offered China access to their most important cutting-edge developments.

And the report says nothing about U.S. export controls, or lack thereof, or the penetration of American industry – either domestically or in China where sensitive U.S. companies operate. Nor does it explain how to protect critical technology.

For these reasons and others, the Pentagon’s report fails to provide any useful policy guidance either to the Congress or the Biden administration.

■ *What’s Really Going On*

China is building its military power on U.S. technology. Previously, China depended on Russia, but saw clearly that Russia was not competitive in high technology and lacked the industrial base to support its war industries. China’s leaders recognized that the U.S. had significant advantages, but that it was also their main competitor. China was, in any case, anxious to open its doors to U.S. industry and it flooded the U.S. with Chinese students. These students focused on key industries including microelectronics, sensors, computers, special materials, advanced software, automation, artificial intelligence, manufacturing technology and “commercial” aerospace. America’s top companies, attracted by a potentially huge Chinese market, were willing to share their expertise and know-how. The U.S. government encouraged them to move into China and imposed few, if any, real restrictions so long as the technology ostensibly was civilian.

China makes no distinction between civilian and military technology. Every contribution of American technology is a contribution to Beijing’s military-industrial complex.

■ *Espionage and Cooperation*

China makes no distinction between civilian and military technology. Every contribution of American technology is a contribution to Beijing’s

military-industrial complex. Where doors remain closed, especially for technology developed under U.S. defense contracts, China engages in systematic espionage operations.

Chinese espionage in the United States is aimed at both civilian and military targets. Many companies have learned, to their dismay, that China can take American commercial products and manufacture cheaper copies. A great example is solar panels. Despite significant U.S. investments in solar panel technology during the Obama administration (most of which has gone down the proverbial taxpayer-funded toilet), China “now holds a market share in excess of 80 percent for all manufacturing stages of solar panels, more than double its share of global demand,” according to Nikkei.com. Or battery technology, important for electric vehicles but also for battery-powered devices. China has all but cornered the market on lithium and other rare earth materials needed

for batteries. The United States, on the advice of the Pentagon unfortunately, decided not to invest in domestic mining and refining rare earth production.

It gets even more serious with new technologies including gallium nitride

micro-chips and sensors. The single most important use for gallium nitride is detecting stealth aircraft and defeating long-range weapons, including Beyond Visual Range (BVR) missiles launched from aircraft. The distribution of gallium nitride technology is already mostly out of control because the U.S. made no

delivery platform. The U.S. hypersonic effort, in the formative period, included extensive cooperation with Russia and China. America did not advance the hypersonic design it originated; in fact, it trashed the X47C that would have used Ming's design. Meanwhile, Russia and China already have introduced hyper-

super-sensitive Los Alamos National Laboratory, some with top U.S. security clearances, took jobs in China between 1987 and 2021.

The number of Chinese citizens studying in the United States tops 250,000 for graduates and undergraduates, and more than 10,000 others are in research institutions

attempt to regulate its spread abroad, especially to China. New types of radars that can detect and target stealth aircraft, including the B-2 bomber, F-22 and F-35 fighter jets, or even the future 6th Generation Fighter the U.S. intends to develop, are being deployed by China. China's most modern aircraft and air defense systems are being equipped with active electronically-scanned radars (AESA) that feature gallium nitride components.

■ *Chinese "Scholars"*

The number of Chinese citizens studying in the United States tops 250,000 for graduates and undergraduates, and more than 10,000 others are in research institutions. Many of them have previously served in China's military, while others are trained spies.

China's scholars operate in sensitive areas such as biotechnology (see National Institutes of Health and other grants to Wuhan's National Institute of Virology), nanotechnology, and advanced materials. One Chinese-American expert, Ming Han Tang, who was the chief engineer of NASA's hypersonic program in the late 1990s, developed a hypersonic glide vehicle design that China now uses for its DF-ZF nuclear weapons glide vehicle, considered China's most dangerous nuclear

sonic weapons into their arsenals. Now the United States is trying to catch up but has no operational system.

U.S. government agencies have hired Chinese nationals who are connected to the People's Liberation Army. NASA's Marine data expert Li Zhijin, who also has worked for the U.S. Navy and other government agencies, graduated from a research academy of the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAA) in Nanjing. Li presided over the development of data assimilation systems to support multiple major research projects and observational experiments of NASA, the Navy, and the Department of Energy.

Chinese operations against American tech are based on the premise that China is building an advanced industrial base as well as exploiting American commercial and defense technology for its military expansion...

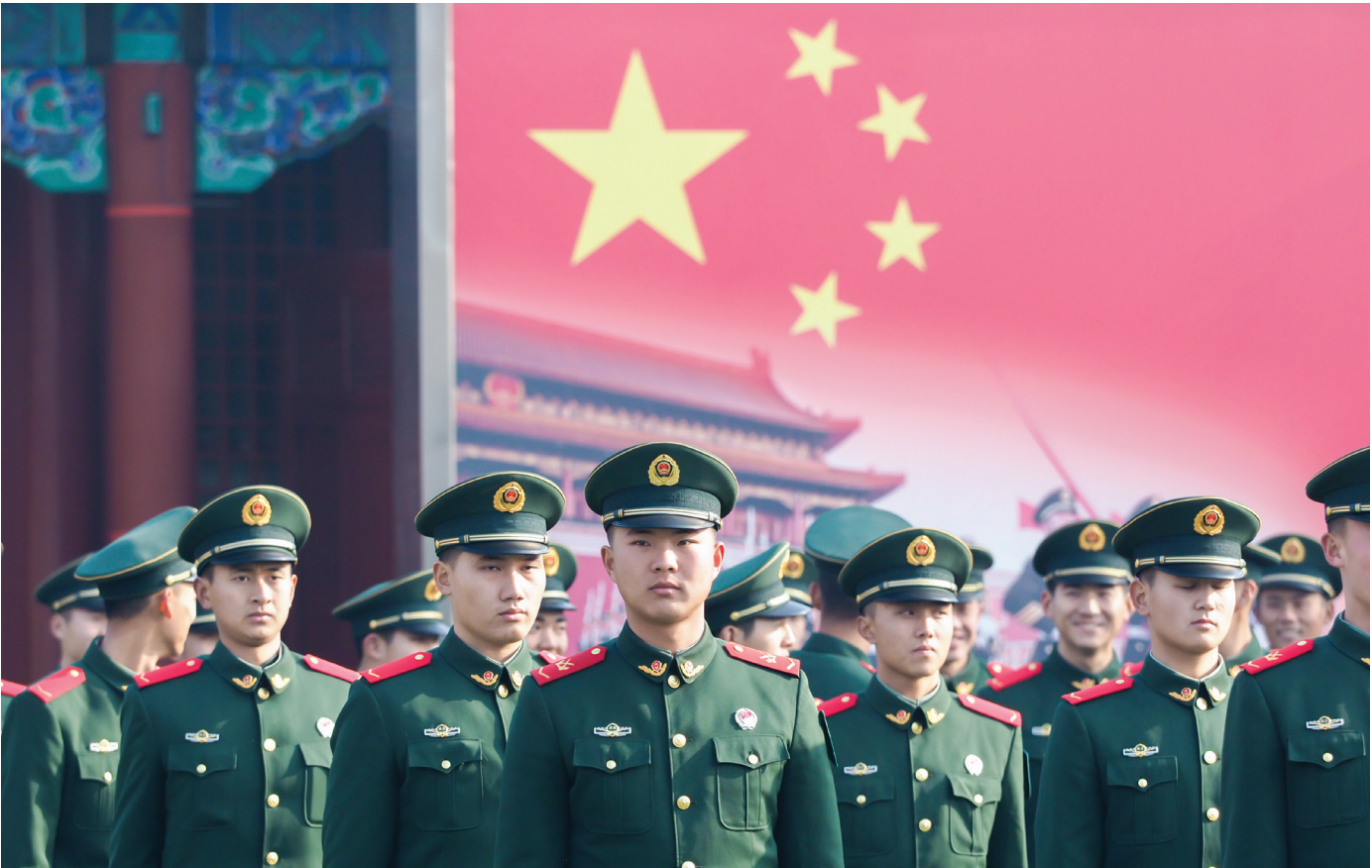
China also invites hundreds of academics and scientists to China, offering them a chance to participate in conferences, present papers, or take honorary teaching posts. Often these are lucrative opportunities for professors and researchers. One hundred sixty-two scientists and technicians from the

■ *Top-Down and Bottom-up*

China's technology operations work from the top down where possible, or from the bottom up when necessary. Top-down means collaborating with U.S. scientists and industry. China typically identifies the scientists and institutions and organizations and sets out a plan to attract them to work with Chinese entities.

Bottom-up works when open collaboration is not possible, either because of export controls or because the company or organization wants to protect its proprietary information. Through cyber-espionage, Chinese cyber-teams get lists of employees, especially those with U.S. government security clearances, and hack their email and social media accounts. Often this will expose their circle of colleagues and friends, and even passwords to company computer systems. Chinese hackers then see what they can steal. In some cases, especially where the employee may have Chinese relatives or have personal problems, Chinese spies seek to suborn individuals in the United States and put them to work for Beijing.

In sum, Chinese operations against American tech, based on the premise that China is building an advanced industrial base as well as exploiting American commercial and defense technology for its military expansion, present a challenge to the United States that is not being met.



Chinese army soldiers in uniform lining up in Tiananmen Square, Beijing.

■ What Should Be Done

The incoming Congress features a Republican-led House of Representatives. There is a push to create a new Select Committee on China to strengthen American policies. The Select Committee could be a powerful force if it formulates executable policies to protect U.S. national security and America's competitive posture.

Congress could:

1. Legislate an export organization comparable to the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS). CFIUS, led by the Treasury Department with the participation of other departments and agencies supported by U.S. intelligence, determines whether foreign investments in the United States could negatively impact national security.

A different committee should focus on companies that want to sell sensitive technology, know how, manufacturing, and product designs to foreign entities.

The only – and mostly non-functioning – barriers to such sales are U.S. export control laws and review mechanisms, managed by the State Department (for military technology) and the Commerce Department for dual-use technologies organized under the U.S. Export Control Act. Treasury also administers sanctions on foreign entities in its Office of Foreign Asset Controls (OFAC). These departments and organizations typically focus on the export of products to foreign end-users. Other than OFAC, which can prevent an industrial deal with a sanctioned foreign country, there is no practical way foreign deals are reviewed unless a specific category of manufacturing technology and equipment already is prohibited.

This was done recently by the Biden administration, acting unilaterally, on very advanced semiconductor manufacturing equipment for China. On the other hand, the White House did not stop technological cooperation; it only prevented the export of chips and

manufacturing equipment.

A new agency should be empowered to review technological cooperation before an American company makes deals with Chinese entities. A Committee on Exports of Sensitive Technology (CEST) offers a solution. A company that wants to set up shop in China or cooperate with Chinese entities would need to ask CEST for permission, and CEST (like CFIUS) could either block a deal or put in place limits and requirements, which the government would enforce. CEST, like CFIUS, would be charged with protecting U.S. national security and competitiveness in sensitive sectors including energy, nanotechnology, artificial intelligence, sensors, materials (such as rare earths, copper, nickel, uranium, titanium, advanced composites), and aerospace.

2. Remove Chinese Products from U.S. Critical Infrastructure. Today, U.S. critical infrastructure is loaded with Chinese equipment. This includes the military, the Departments of

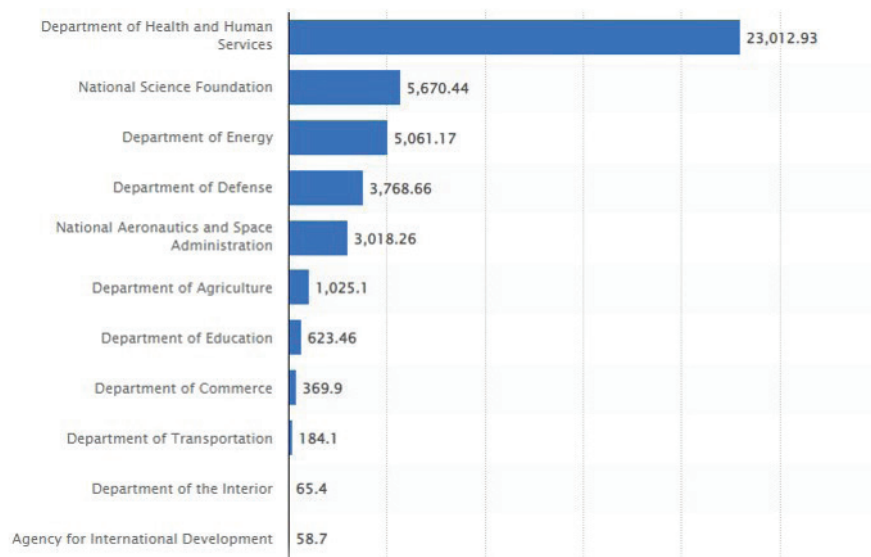
Defense, State, and Energy, and virtually all government agencies. Workers in DoD type on computers either made in China or containing Chinese parts, military networks rely on routers manufactured in China but carrying the labels of American companies, and surveillance cameras protecting U.S. military bases and embassies abroad are built in China and connected to the Internet without any security. Congress should set a hard timetable to get rid of Chinese equipment and require government departments and agencies to audit existing installations, identify the equipment of Chinese origin, and implement an urgent removal program.

3. New Standards for Security.

Despite the U.S. spending tens of billions of dollars on computer security solutions, China (and others, including Russia) have stolen billions of dollars' worth of sensitive national security information and information on government employees with security clearances. Chinese hacking is sophisticated and relentless. Between 2013 and 2015 the U.S. government's Office of Personnel Management was attacked successfully by Chinese hackers who got their hands on records of current and former government employees. Approximately 22.1 million records were stolen, including over four million that involved security clearance forms, providing the Chinese with extensive personal histories of the victims, their home addresses, phone numbers, family member names, friends names, and more. While efforts have been made to harden government and military data centers and networks, most of the information is not encrypted nor is it classified.

Data centers and networks need multi-layer security, strong encryption of all information (classified or not), data controlled on a need-to-know basis, hardware tokens for access with geolocation and geofencing capabilities so stolen tokens won't work, and a comprehensive clean-out of both foreign and compromised equipment conducted on an urgent basis.

4. Restore and strengthen the Trump-era China initiative on research collaboration that was unilaterally cancelled by the Biden administration. The Trump administration sought to limit government research grants to professors and scientists who are not affiliated with China, and to remove grants and support where a China connection was identified. The level of U.S. government funding is huge. In 2020 the numbers look like this:



Figures in millions of dollars

In 2020, Washington provided Beijing almost \$43 billion dollars in research money. It makes sense to ensure that research money is not a backdoor subsidy for China or supports Chinese research.

5. Build a new Critical Technologies List. In the 1970s, DoD undertook an effort to create a Military Critical Technology List (MCTL), which proved helpful in identifying technology that needed protection and was useful in reviewing export licenses. In recent years, the significance of the MCTL declined as export control discipline generally disappeared.

In 2021, the Pentagon made another effort to build a critical technology list and the General Accounting Office reviewed the effort optimistically, even though the program stalled. To fully support a program that focuses on vital

current and emerging technology, a new Critical Technologies List (CTL) is needed. New generations of weapons depend on elaborate sensor-to-shooter capabilities with a high level of automation. The underlying technologies need to be protected, and decision makers need clear information on what is strategically important to security and how to protect it – as well as information on what potential adversaries are doing to develop

their own and/or steal ours. In particular, a new CTL needs to focus on what near-peers China and Russia are doing, how advanced they are, how dependent they may be on U.S. technological assets. It should propose effective measures to counter them.

A whole-of-government solution is needed to reestablish American leadership in high technology. But there is no official policy that clearly outlines the threat posed by China nor is there guidance on the protection of U.S. technology. The new Congress should promote a complete program to answer the challenge.

STEPHEN D. BRYEN, *Ph.D.*, is a senior fellow at the Center for Security Policy and the Yorktown Institute, and former director of the Defense Technology Security Agency at the Pentagon.

Antisemitism: Endangering America and Its Values

by ADAM MILSTEIN

At a summit held by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in November, FBI Director Christopher Wray spoke about “the tragic reality that the Jewish community uniquely ends up on the receiving end of hate-fueled attacks from all sides.” He referred to the white supremacist attacks in recent years in Poway, CA and Pittsburgh, PA and the 2022 attack at the synagogue in Colleyville, TX, motivated by “violent Jihad.” But it’s not just white supremacists and radical Muslims.

There are myriad groups espousing Jew-hatred – the far-right, the far-left, radical Muslims, and black supremacists such as Louis Farrakhan, to name a few. The reality is that these groups and their individual members and supporters pose a danger not only to the Jewish community but also to all Americans. Antisemites target Jews first, as they see the Jewish people as easy prey, but what they are really after is changing America beyond recognition, according to their distorted and extreme ideologies.

The tragic reality is that America as a whole is on the receiving end of hate-fueled attacks from all the radical elements of society. The fabric of America is disintegrating in front of our eyes at the hands of the sworn enemies of the American and the Jewish people.

■ *Threat to Jewish Americans*

In recent years, the threat against American Jews, and consequently the American people, has been mounting. Per FBI Director Wray, “A full 63 percent of religious hate crimes are motivated by antisemitism—targeting a

group that makes up just 2.4 percent of our population.”

Interestingly, this hate is one of the sole common threads between far-right, far-left, radical Muslim, and black supremacist ideologies. These groups are united by familiar antisemitic tropes of a nefarious and powerful Jewish or “Zionist” cabal that allegedly seeks to dominate and subjugate individuals, societies, and nations through behind-the-scenes scheming.

More and more, these hate groups, who at their core are enemies to each other, are coalescing and cooperating in their hatred of the Jewish people and the Jewish state.

How did we arrive to this point, and is antisemitism just a Jewish problem?

■ *Far-Right Threat*

Jew-hatred from the far-right has grown in recent years with the popularization of the Great Replacement con-

spiracy theory. It commonly holds Jews responsible for a plot to subjugate if not eliminate the white race through promotion of non-white mass immigration,

feminism, transgenderism, and other supposedly devious schemes. Hence, at the notorious white supremacist “Unite the Right” rally held in Charlottesville, Virginia in August 2017, marchers feverishly chanted, “Jews will not replace us.”

Within the year, this unfolded into real-world violence against Jews. Accused in the October 2018 murder of 11 Jews at Pittsburgh’s Tree of Life synagogue is 50-year-old white supremacist Robert Gregory Bowers. This Shabbat morning attack was the deadliest on Jews in America’s history. Blaming the Jews for mass migration to the U.S., Bowers posted on social media before the attack, “I can’t sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. Screw your optics, I’m going in.”

A little over a year later in April 2019, 19-year-old John Timothy Earnest burst into the Chabad of Poway synagogue outside San Diego, killing one

There are myriad groups espousing Jew-hatred-- the far-right, the far-left, radical Muslims, and black supremacists such as Louis Farrakhan, to name a few.

congregant in a blast of gunfire, again during Sabbath services. In his manifesto, Earnest wrote, “Every Jew is responsible for the meticulously planned

congregant in a blast of gunfire, again during Sabbath services. In his manifesto, Earnest wrote, “Every Jew is responsible for the meticulously planned



Black Hebrew Israelites in Washington, DC. (Photo: OZinOH/Flickr)

genocide of the European race. They act as a unit, and every Jew plays his part to enslave the other races around him – whether consciously or subconsciously.”

As I’ve warned, the Jews were just the first, most attractive target. Soon these attacks spread to the rest of America. In August 2019, a far-right shooter targeted Latinos in an El Paso, Texas Walmart, killing 23. In May 2022, a far-right shooter targeted black Americans at a supermarket in Buffalo, New York, killing 10. Both cited the “Great Replacement” theory as motivations for their attacks.

■ **Black Nationalist Threat**

Jew-hatred doesn’t only come from white nationalists, but also from black nationalists, who since the 1960s have been exerting a major national influence through the ideas of the numerically small Nation of Islam (NOI) and their cohorts through race pride for African Americans and black separatism.

Hatred of Jews has long been brewing in the black community. Louis Farrakhan, the leader of the antisemitic NOI, has been a prominent voice among African Americans for decades.

Farrakhan spews hateful venom at Jews, alleging that the Jewish people were responsible for the trans-Atlantic

slave trade and that they conspire to control government, communications media and Hollywood, as well as various black individuals and organizations. He frequently denies the legitimacy of Judaism--or the Jewish claim to the Land of Israel--arguing that “Judaism is nothing more than a ‘deceptive lie’ and a ‘theological error’ promoted by Jews to further their ‘control’ over America’s government and economy.”

The severity of this problem burst onto the national scene in December 2019, with a spate of attacks against the Jewish community in the New York metropolitan area. On December 10, two heavily armed individuals connected to the Black Hebrew Israelite (BHI) movement murdered three people at a kosher supermarket in Jersey City, NJ. Weeks later, on December 28, a BHI-inspired individual attacked a Chanukah gathering in Monsey, NY with a large knife, killing 72-year-old Rabbi Josef Neumann.

Once again, this hate then migrated from Jews to the rest of society. In November 2021, Darrell Brooks, a black nationalist, drove his SUV into a crowd of Christmas parade attendees in Waukesha, WI, killing six people and wounding dozens. In April 2022, another black nationalist, Frank Robert James, perpetrated a mass shooting on

the New York City subway during rush hour, injuring 29 people. James’s online incitement and bigotry included antisemitic diatribes.

Farrakhan’s views are echoed in the recent antisemitic outbursts of famed rapper Kanye West, who now goes by “Ye.” West is now claiming, “Somehow our country has been taken over by, you know, maybe about 300 Zionists.” Farrakhan and West have actually been publicly connected for years, with West referring to him as “sensei” in one of his songs.

When West talks about blacks being the real Jews, he mimics the beliefs of the Black Hebrew Israelites. While white supremacists say, “Jews will not replace us,” BHI followers insist they are us. Just this past month, a group of BHI marchers in Brooklyn ominously chanted, “we are the real Jews.”

And now Kanye West has united with the far right, bringing white supremacist Nick Fuentes along with him when dining with former President Donald Trump at the latter’s Mar-a-Lago resort in Florida on November 22.

■ **“Red-Green” Left-Right Allies**

Not to be outdone, the radical left has been boosting its Jew-hatred for decades, disguising it by using hatred for the homeland of the Jewish people, the state of Israel, instead. This radical new grouping of antisemitism initially gained intellectual currency in universities and other leftist intellectual circles. Contemporary antisemitism can be found among members of the radical left, who are inherently anti-American and see Israel as a symbol of American and Western imperialism, aggressive military rule, and the violation of human rights.

Similarly, radical Muslims have long sought Israel’s destruction and promulgated conspiracies about Jewish-Zionist global domination. Despite the fact that radical Muslims and leftists are naturally otherwise misaligned in their

belief systems and ideologies, they have joined forces against Jews and the West. As the Reut Group warns, “The strategic partnership between the radical left and political Islam, known as the red-green or Islamo-Left alliance, emerged in Europe, but it has migrated to the U.S. in recent years.” Despite their hatred and intolerance for each other, they have a shared agenda that is anti-Western, anti-American, and anti-Zionist.

The New Antisemites report by StopAntisemitism.org and Zachor Legal

“white adjacent” in a “system of white oppression”), the agenda ultimately seeks to undermine and replace fundamental American values and replace it with its own radical vision.

■ **Islam-Left Ties**

The strange alliance between the radical left and radical Muslims – two groups that, despite their seemingly incompatible worldviews, happily collaborate against Israel and the Jews – can be explained by the theory of “intersection-

streets wearing Jewish symbols, congregating outside Jewish community buildings, or even speaking Hebrew or Yiddish in public. This is a growing threat to American society. Street violence and hate speech is replacing American principles of reasoned discourse and debate.

Through intersectionality, the Red-Green alliance seeks to replace universal virtues like tolerance, pluralism, freedom of speech, and rule of law with racialized “anti-racism,” hierarchical critical race theory, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies that discriminate against Asians, Jews and whites, intolerant “cancel culture,” and the censorship of social media “de-platforming.”

■ **Danger on the Doorstep**

Defining antisemitism as a Jewish problem is a lose-lose proposition. Antisemitism is a threat to America, as it is a harbinger of rising violent extremism that will soon consume us all.

Together, those who foremost target Jews – white and black nationalists as well as the Red-Green alliance of the left and Islamists – are a fundamental threat to America and its values. These radical groups are spearheading efforts to erode the core principles that make our country exceptional, replacing America’s commitment to individual rights and equality, meritocracy, rule of law, tolerance, pluralism, due process, freedom of speech, and free-market capitalism with a racialized and violent world steeped in conspiracy theories and political polarization.

The Jewish people have long been portrayed as the sacrificial “canary in the coal mine,” a powerless creature that through its demise will warn others of danger. However, here we are not a canary but an eagle, warning Americans of the looming threats on the horizon. Heed our warnings.

ADAM MILSTEIN *is an Israeli-American “Impact Philanthropist.” He can be found on Twitter @AdamMilstein.*

Jews in America now report that they often fear walking the streets wearing Jewish symbols, congregating outside Jewish community buildings, or even speaking Hebrew or Yiddish in public.

Institute in which anti-Zionism or hatred of Israel is identified as an acceptable stand-in for the classical hatred of Jews, documents how this contemporary hate, as disseminated by the Islamo-Left’s so-called “Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions” (BDS) Movement, is negatively influencing large segments of the U.S. population and creating a dangerous environment that normalizes vilification of Jews, as well as inciting violence against Jews, something that history has shown to have deadly consequences.

The radical left has also been promoting Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) programs at universities and high schools, contributing to antisemitism in the American education system. However, antisemitism is not just a Jewish problem – it is an American problem. While CRT and DEI policies may disproportionately target and harm Jewish students (identifying them as

ality” adopted by many in the far left. According to this theory, groups that consider themselves neglected and discriminated against must come together to fight against each of those groups’ supposed enemies.

This new partnership was on full display during the last major conflict between Israel and the Palestinians in May 2021, when terror groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad launched more than 4,000 rockets and mortars at Israeli civilians. Americans witnessed stunning and unprecedented scenes in New York, Los Angeles, and other major politically progressive urban centers of Jews being assaulted by mobs of anti-Israel activists. This surge of anti-Jewish hate also included harassment, vandalism and online abuse.

Few imagined that such a wave of violence against Jews in American cities would be possible within living memory of the Holocaust. Jews in America now report that they often fear walking the

Aspirations for the 118th Congressional Session

by LAURI B. REGAN and SARAH STERN

Since Israel's founding, it has received bipartisan support from American lawmakers and citizens alike. In particular, after the 1973 Yom Kippur War, President Richard Nixon recognized Israeli regional military dominance, as well as the need to prevent future disruption of Mideast oil flows. This led to expansion of Pax Americana to the Mediterranean/Persian Gulf through a strategic alliance with Israel. Historian Martin Kramer noted, "Since 1973, the Arab states have understood not only that Israel is strong, but that the United States is fully behind it."

Relative peace prevailed without any U.S. boots on the ground in Israel.

In fact, with American support, Israel entered into peace agreements with Egypt in 1978 and Jordan in 1994; and under the Trump administration, Israel signed the Abraham Accords with Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Sudan, and Morocco – with expectations that additional Arab countries would join in the near future.

Not only does unconditional U.S. support for Israel lead to peace in the region, it also has helped – and continues to help – U.S. national security by having a powerful ally on the frontlines of the war on terror. Israel's military, intelligence, experience, technology, and medical advancements (most especially on the battlefield) have helped save American lives both abroad and at home.

Recognizing Israel not just as the only democracy in the region and a country with similar values, culture, and

respect for human rights, but as a strategic asset to the United States, bipartisan support for this alliance existed for decades. In 2010 for instance, 337 members of the House of Representatives wrote a bipartisan letter to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton expressing their strong support for Israel and 76 Senators sent a separate letter stating:

Israel continues to be the one true democracy in the Middle East that brings stability to a region where it is in short supply. Whether fighting Soviet expansionism or the current threats from regional aggression and terrorism, Israel has been a consistent, reliable ally and friend and has helped to advance American interests.

Just over a decade later, after eight years of an Obama administration that pursued a new policy of putting daylight between the U.S. and Israel and ending the Pax Americana that had bolstered stability in the region for decades, bipartisan support of Israel has been waning. This is a disturbing development not only for Israel but also the U.S.

■ **Israel as a Partisan Issue**

Israel is now a partisan issue, not just at the executive level but in Congress as well. The vast majority of Republican lawmakers provide strong support for a close U.S.-Israel relationship, an understanding of the need to continue to provide military support for Israel (75 percent of which is spent in the U.S. on American-manufactured equipment)

including funding for Israel's Iron Dome anti-missile system, and a willingness to fight burgeoning antisemitism that has led to violence against Jews across the globe.

At the same time, there is a growing contingent in the Democrat Party that harbors not only animosity toward the only Jewish state, but also makes antisemitic statements and has associated with Jew-haters. Today's antisemitism often is couched in anti-Zionist language but members of the congressional Democrats' progressive caucus, including the infamous "Squad," have made outright antisemitic statements without significant repercussions. In fact, some have been elevated to important committee assignments, such as Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-MN) who sits on the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-MI) on the House Financial Services Committee.

This growing anti-Israel Democrat contingent in Congress is preventing important pieces of legislation from either passage or implementation that would help both Israel and the Jewish people. For instance, Congress, with the help of our organization, the Endowment for Middle East Truth (EMET), passed the Taylor Force Act, which requires defunding the Palestinian Authority (PA) until it stops rewarding terrorists for killing Jews. But the Biden administration is refusing to enforce the Act and Congress has failed to ensure its implementation.

Furthermore, when the House attempted to pass a resolution condemning Rep. Omar for antisemitic comments,

the measure was diluted until it referred generally to all forms of hate, and Omar was not specifically censured.

■ *The Agenda*

A new alliance is emerging among China, Russia, North Korea, and Iran, and their antipathy toward the United States is the cement that holds these disparate regimes together. It is essential, then, that military and intelligence cooperation between the United States and the state of Israel continue and advance.

A 25-year \$400 billion cooperation program between China and Iran creates a formidable danger for the United States and its allies in the Middle East and elsewhere. China is ahead of the U.S. in development of hypersonic anti-missile technology. Hypersonic missiles use lasers and can fly five times the speed of sound, making them impossible to detect using conventional radar. U.S.-Israel military Research & Development (R&D) cooperation helps the U.S. remain globally competitive.

As the United States retrenches, and if it completes the often-mentioned “pivot to Asia,” it will need to rely even more on Israeli military and security forces as “eyes and ears” in the Middle East. Therefore, appropriations that encourage further technological and intelligence sharing and joint maneuvers between American armed forces and the Israeli military will be a net advantage for the United States. And the might of the U.S. will serve as a reminder to Iran, perhaps no more than weeks away from a nuclear weapons breakout, to restrain itself.

Academia, with significant influence on Congress, the news media, and the public, poses a difficult set of issues. For a brief period after al-Qaeda’s terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, most Americans understood that our enemies mean business. However, in part due to the anti-Western influence of “anti-imperialist” and anti-Zionist Middle East and international relations departments in American universities, and the spread



Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib. (Photo: Flickr/brads651)

of that influence through news and entertainment media, many in the foreign policy establishment have convinced themselves that once Palestinian Arabs rid themselves of Israeli occupation, they will be favorably inclined toward the United States.

But Palestinian leadership always has thrown its support behind America’s enemies, from Nikita Khrushchev to Fidel Castro to Qassim Soleimani. Moreover, since the early 20th century, long before the 1967 Six-Day War, the Palestinian aspiration has been to hold all the land from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea, eliminating Israel.

■ *Issues on Campus*

EMET has worked to overcome educational biases within the classroom, including promoting passage of amendments to Title VI of the Higher Education Act that call for “a balance of perspectives” and “wide range of viewpoints” in taxpayer-funded Middle Eastern Studies programs. However, these amendments have been almost totally ignored, and anti-Israel biases are almost “baked into” the teaching of Middle Eastern studies on many American college campuses.

The Trump administration had used the amendments to attempt to withhold money for a particularly heinous tax-supported event sponsored at the

University of North Carolina together with Duke University. However, after a letter from the university to the Office of Civil Rights promising better behavior, the program was reinstated. Congress must make sure such programs are held accountable and tax funds are not used to support biased Middle East studies efforts.

Not only in the classroom but also broadly on campus, American Jewish and Zionist students have been intimidated and demonized for their support of the Jewish state, and in more than a few instances, forced to choose between their Zionism and their acceptance into student government and university clubs. Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act makes no mention of religion, but of “race, color or national origin.” EMET worked in the past with Senators Tim Scott (R-SC) and Bob Casey (D-PA) to introduce the Antisemitism Awareness Act that would give Jewish students the same rights on university campuses as any other minority group. Now, with antisemitism steadily migrating from the college campus to the town square, this issue must be readdressed.

■ *Palestinian Education*

The West Bank – Judea and Samaria – is disputed territory subject to negotiation. But the Palestinian’s aspiration is not to end what they call “the occupation”

of that territory, but to eliminate Israel. That is clear in the cry, “Palestine will be free, from the river to the sea!” Such anti-Israel incitement, banned by the 1993 Oslo Accords, nevertheless is taught incessantly in Palestinian and UNRWA schools. Such indoctrination helps to ensure that peaceful relations between Israelis and Palestinians will remain a distant dream.

For the past several decades, there have been constant legislative attempts to review Palestinian textbooks and to cease all aid to the Palestinians until they stop hate education. However, highly paid lobbyists for UNRWA have been white-washing the textbooks, and U.S. taxpayers’ dollars continue to fund UN-sponsored anti-Israel, anti-Jewish propaganda.

The United Nations itself was founded in the immediate aftermath of World War II, upon the loftiest of principles. Yet in the 77 years since its establishment, it has strayed far from its high-minded purpose. Most recently, the UN Human Rights Council voted for a permanent, open-ended Commission of Inquiry against Israel, which will have an initial cost of \$10 million, and \$5 million every year thereafter. American taxpayer funds are expected to support this anti-Israel bigotry.

■ ***The Taylor Force Act***

The Palestinian Authority has a lavish system of payments to the families of terrorists who have been “martyred,” or to the terrorists themselves in prison. It is an intricate system, but, in essence, the more Israelis or Americans they kill, the more is paid out to them.

The Taylor Force Act was passed by Congress and signed into law in 2018. It is named for an American Army commander who had returned safely from tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, only to be stabbed to death by a Palestinian terrorist while walking near the beach in Tel Aviv. The purpose of this federal law is to deduct the payments that the PA routinely makes to

terrorists or their families from U.S. aid.

The Biden administration has totally overlooked and ignored both the letter and the spirit of the Taylor Force Act. In 2022, the administration provided the PA with nearly \$1 billion, violating the law with impunity. In November, EMET helped with a congressional letter signed by 38 Republican members demanding a response to this and other issues.

■ ***Iran***

Courageous dissidents on the streets of Iran have risked everything, including their very lives, to overthrow their brutal, suffocating theocracy. As of this writing, nearly 500 Iranian protesters have been killed, including more

ballistic missile development system, sponsorship of international terrorism, and further suppression of the rights of Iran’s people.

Although in September 2022, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken called a near-term agreement “unlikely,” in October, he said, “We still believe diplomacy is the best path forward.”

Israeli policymakers and analysts understand what they are up against and firmly believe that Iran is developing intercontinental ballistic missiles not simply to reach from Tehran to Tel Aviv, but from Tehran to Washington, DC. And they know that like all zealots, the regime’s hegemonic aspirations know no bounds. However, because of the cur-

Members of the new Congress must connect the dots regarding Iran’s danger not just to Israel but also to the United States. Israel is their “Little Satan.” America is the “Great Satan.”

than 50 children. The Iranian parliament, the Majles, instituted the death penalty for anti-regime demonstrators. As the mullahs are increasingly threatened, they have become increasingly brutal. The administration’s support for the dissidents has been muted, and the new Congress should hold hearings on this matter.

Between the demonstrations that have rocked Iran and Iran’s sale of drones to Russia, which the Russians have used in their war in Ukraine, it might be assumed that the administration has abandoned its hope for a renewed nuclear agreement with Tehran. Such a pact would only reward the regime with billions of dollars that would be used for Tehran’s nuclear program,

rent mood of retrenchment within the United States, it looks as if Israel might possibly be alone to do the heavy lifting when it comes to the Iranian nuclear threat. Members of the new Congress must connect the dots regarding Iran’s danger not just to Israel but also to the United States. Israel is their “Little Satan.” America is the “Great Satan.”

The new Congress needs to affirm that Washington and Jerusalem, together, make possible a more stable, prosperous, pro-Western Middle East.

LAURI B. REGAN is EMET’s New York Chapter President and serves on its Board of Directors and Board of Advisors, and SARAH STERN is EMET’s Founder and President.

Action Needed to Maintain U.S. Nuclear Deterrence

by **PETER HUESSY**

In December 2010, a deal was struck between the U.S. Senate and the Obama administration to finalize funding for the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and the nation's warhead production laboratories and support facilities. Together with previous funding by Congress, the U.S. adopted a nuclear modernization strategy that included four elements: (1) three new replacement legs of the U.S. nuclear TRIAD; (2) an upgrade and sustainment of the U.S. nuclear warhead production complex; (3) a cyber resistant nuclear command and control technology; and (4) sustainment and maintenance resources to ensure the continued credibility of our aging legacy nuclear forces.

Over the 12 years since, Congress has appropriated \$475 billion to rebuild our nuclear deterrent, with the fiscal year 2022 budget of \$51 billion including the Department of Defense and Department of Energy's NNSA. This modernization effort is the first recapitalization of the U.S. nuclear deterrent in four decades, an historically unprecedented pause in acquiring needed nuclear forces.

As a result, U.S. legacy forces are aging, with intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) averaging 49 years of age, submarines (42 years) and bombers (50 years) kept in the force far beyond their original projected lifetimes. A combined effort (that can be described as nothing short of heroic) by the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Navy and defense industry has, however, kept the nuclear deterrent credible, although these sustainment costs are some two-thirds of all the annual nuclear funding including rebuilding our nuclear command and control

capabilities, providing a life extension for the warheads in the nation's inventory, and maintenance of the U.S. force structure of nuclear capable bombers, ICBMs, SLBMs and submarines.

■ **Triad or no Triad?**

Members of the new Congress need to understand that opponents of nuclear modernization efforts make two major claims and invoke two adopted narratives. The two claims are: (1) The 2010 funding deal initiated an unnecessary arms race and is unaffordable; and (2) the U.S. can unilaterally deploy at least one-third fewer warheads than allowed by the New START treaty and safely ensure deterrence by unilaterally eliminating funding for the new Sentinel ICBMs and their associated warheads.

As for narratives, opponents of nuclear modernization have pursued from

challenging the United States or its allies. Even more off the mark was an additional adopted narrative that bought into the Chinese self-definition of its growing economic and military power as a gentle "peaceful rise."

■ **Modernization or Not?**

Following the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, American military and security strategy focused almost exclusively on terrorist threats. This led to dual wars in Afghanistan and Iraq lasting decades. By 2010 when the NNSA nuclear modernization deal was put together by Senator Jon Kyl (R-AZ) and James Miller of the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the U.S. had neglected its nuclear forces to such an extent that one U.S. Air Force general quipped the U.S. had gone on an extensive "nuclear acquisition holiday from history."

The modernization of U.S. nuclear forces does not initiate an arms race; does not sustain an excess number of nuclear warheads; and if anything may not be sufficient to deter both Russia and China...

the breakup of the Soviet Union and its empire a "reset" of relations with Russia that would allow U.S. military spending to decline, especially resources dedicated to nuclear capabilities. Assumptions were adopted that turned out to be widely off the mark – especially that Russia was no longer an enemy or adversary but a "competitor" uninterested in militarily

The U.S. now faces sustaining very old legacy nuclear forces as noted above. Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) of the Senate Armed Services Committee explained that delaying the modernization of any element of the nuclear enterprise risks our nuclear deterrent becoming unworkable, what former House Armed Services Committee (HASC) staffer

Clark Murdock described as “rusting to obsolescence.”

Not modernizing, however unintended, is a choice literally to get out of the nuclear business, what Admiral Charles Richard, Commander of U.S. Strategic Command, called the “Or Else” dilemma. American military planners do not know whether our nuclear platforms of land- and sea-launched intercontinental ballistic missiles, bombers, cruise missiles or submarines, will last beyond their currently scheduled replacement, especially because all elements now in the force have been in service much longer than expected.

In short, advocating a slowdown in modernization and continued life extensions of existing systems threatens the consequence of the U.S. falling off the nuclear cliff when suddenly the top military commanders cannot certify to the president that our deterrent requirements can be met.

The choice then is between modernization now or getting out of the nuclear business. Without nuclear forces, the U.S. would still be in a world in which Russia, China, and North Korea have thousands of nuclear weapons aimed at America’s heartland. Hardly a reassuring position.

■ ***Arms Control and Arms Racing***

The modernization of U.S. nuclear forces does not initiate an arms race; does not sustain an excess number of nuclear warheads; and if anything may not be sufficient to deter both Russia and China toward the end of this decade or before.

Between 1992-97, in large part due to the START I and START II treaties signed by President George H. W. Bush and Russian President Boris Yeltsin, the U.S. unilaterally stopped production of our Ohio Class nuclear missile submarines, our Peacekeeper ICBMs, and the B-2 bomber, bringing to a dead stop any further modernization of our nuclear TRIAD.

The U.S., also through a presidential

initiative, unilaterally eliminated thousands of land- and sea-based theater or short-range nuclear forces from Europe and Asia, although no treaty required America to do so. Part of the thinking was to set an example for Russia to gather up and eliminate the tens of thousands of Soviet-era theater nuclear forces American experts worried might be going on a “a walk-about” and disappear into the hands of terrorists.

An entire program—Nunn-Lugar—was put together to eliminate these nuclear forces, including those dismantled by Moscow as a result of the START arms control process. Unfortunately, the promised reductions in theater nuclear forces never materialized on the Russian side, as Moscow now maintains anywhere from a 4-to-10-fold advantage over the United States in this area.

Even worse, the Russian Duma in 1999 decided not to ratify the START II treaty, and therefore its critically important ban on multiple warhead land-based missiles did not take effect. Since land-based missiles are on alert at a 99 percent rate, they can be launched suddenly from a “peaceful” day-to-day status without warning.

Hundreds of such Russian missiles held thousands of warheads during the Soviet era, sufficient to raise serious concerns that a “window of vulnerability” was opening, putting at risk entire elements of the U.S. nuclear deterrent. Part of President Ronald Reagan’s solution to that open window was to fully modernize the U.S. nuclear forces, even as we sought marked reductions through arms control including a ban on multiple warheads on land-based missiles. Washington also sought to build effective missile defenses, and ultimately to bring down the Soviet empire. The U.S. did achieve the collapse of the Soviet Union and get arms reductions. Moscow and Washington cut deployed strategic long-range nuclear forces roughly 90 percent under START I and the subsequent Moscow (2002) and New START (2010) agreements.

Despite these reductions, Russia deploys hundreds of multiple warhead land-based missiles and, with its open production lines, can add to its already formidable nuclear arsenal. This instability is compounded by the difficulty under the New START treaty counting rules to verify that Russia has only the 1,550 warheads START allows.

■ ***China***

Added to the Russian danger is China, undertaking what Admiral Richard describes as a “breathtaking” expansion of its nuclear forces. These include 360 new ICBM silos being constructed in western China.

Doubters of China’s nuclear building effort first claimed the silos were for wind farms, although the diameter (10 feet) and spacing (miles apart) of the “silos” were not wind farm compatible. Doubters then claimed the new missile silos would be filled with dummy missiles to draw US firepower and to ensure the real missiles would survive.

But as noted nuclear expert and long-time former Office of the Secretary of Defense official Mark Schneider explains, the Chinese already have highly survivable rail mobile ICBMs that are hidden in mountain tunnels. The new silos, says Schneider, are “first strike” weapons for China, a threat that some U.S. military commanders have likened to that posed by Soviet-era ICBMs.

■ ***Threats Require a U.S. TRIAD***

Although U.S.-Russia arms control has cut countable strategic nuclear weapons by (an assumed) 90 percent, the remaining nuclear threats are serious and, in the view of most members of Congress, play a key role in their continued support for the U.S. nuclear TRIAD.

James Howe and Rick Fisher, two top nuclear experts on Russia and China, respectively, explain the U.S. could in the future be facing a combined 8,000-plus warheads aimed at our heartland. Right now, if we fully loaded our new Columbia class submarine-based

missiles (192) and our Sentinel land-based missiles (400), the U.S. could deploy roughly 2,736 “fast flying” missile warheads, but it would still take approximately four years to get to that expanded level, according to General Frank Klotz, USAF (ret.), a former commander of USAF Global Strike Command and then NNSA Administrator.

■ *The ICBM Fight*

If the U.S. had no ICBMs, as Senator Edward Markey (D-MA) and Representative John Garamendi (D-CA) have proposed, the maximum submarine missile warheads we could deploy would be 1,536, not appreciably different than the 1,490 ICBM and SLBM (Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile) warheads the U.S. is allowed under New START but leaving the U.S. with no hedge with which to build up. This fact contributed heavily to Garamendi’s June 16, 2022 amendment to kill ICBMs failing 309 to 118 in the House. One top sympathetic arms control group described the measure as “getting clobbered.”

The option of building more submarines is available, but the added submarines would have to come into the force post-2042 when the current planned submarine construction program is completed. While previous Nuclear Posture Reviews by successive administrations have left open that possibility, the U.S. could not build such submarines sooner unless it builds another shipyard.

Eliminating ICBMs also carries a serious risk of pre-emption or an attack on all U.S. nuclear capabilities to the point at which the U.S. effectively is disarmed. General Larry Welch, USAF (ret.), former Chief of Staff and Commander of U.S. Strategic Command, explains that a technology breakthrough whereby the Russians or Chinese could find our submarines deployed at sea would allow our submarines to be “attritted” (eliminated) over time.

Former Secretary of the Navy and chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee John Warner told a Capitol

Hill audience some years ago that his biggest fear as Navy Secretary was exactly as Welch described. Warner noted “If one of my boomers does not come home, what do I tell the president when asked who did it? And then what do we do with those submarines still at sea?”

Russia deploys hundreds of multiple warhead land-based missiles and, with its open production lines, can add to its already formidable nuclear arsenal.

Without 400 ICBM silos and the associated 45 launch control centers (and the 50 extra but empty silos the START treaty allows the US to maintain), Russian planners no longer have to worry about more than 50 discrete American nuclear assets that would have to be eliminated if a pre-emptive, disarming first strike were to succeed. With no ICBMs, the U.S. target locus would be two submarine bases, three strategic bomber bases, and about four to six submarines at sea on a day-to-day basis. Or, less than a dozen targets. As General Larry Farrell, USAF (ret.) once told this writer: “Why would we make it easier for Russia to disarm us?”

■ *Restraint or Affording Survival*

A final argument made by critics of nuclear modernization, including the heads of the Arms Control Association and Ploughshares, is that unilateral American restraint would, by setting a good moral example, compel Moscow to follow suit and slow down its own modernization, thus ending the current arms race.

As previously noted, Moscow didn’t follow suit when President George H.W. Bush in 1991 eliminated thousands

of tactical nuclear weapons. David Trachtenberg of the National Institute of Public Policy (NIPP) also studied this issue and in a 2022 review conclusively proved no U.S. restraint has ever compelled Moscow to stop nuclear construction.

In fact, from 1999 to 2022, Russia developed, built, and deployed upwards of two dozen new types of strategic nuclear weapons systems, to the point Russia is now nearly 90 percent of the way to completing its planned build-up. Moscow’s effort is nearly matched, writes Rick Fisher, author of *China’s Military Modernization: Building for Regional and Global Reach*, by China’s current nuclear systems now under development and acquisition.

By contrast, the U.S. is scheduled to deploy its new nuclear armed bombers, submarines, and ICBMs in 2029, completing modernization by 2042, at a current cost of \$11 billion annually. This is a bargain that General James Mattis, USMC (ret.) and former Secretary of Defense (2017-19) described as “affording survival.”

PETER HUESSY is President of *Geo-Strategic Analysis*, Senior Fellow at the *Hudson Institute*, and Visiting Senior Fellow at *The Atlantic Council*. He is writing a book about the U.S. and Soviet nuclear balance and the role of the 1983 *Scowcroft Commission* in Ronald Reagan’s successful campaign to take down the Soviet empire. These views are his own.

Defund Public Broadcasting: Especially NPR

by **ERIC ROZENMAN**

Early in the new Congress, Rep. Doug Lamborn (R-CO) plans to introduce legislation to defund public broadcasting. Specifically, to eliminate further outlays to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting like the \$525 million legislators approved last March for fiscal 2024. That's the federal spending year ending on Sept. 30, 2023.

Actually, CPB's take totals \$611.5 million. This adds \$41 million for a Next Generation Warning System grant to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, \$30.5 million for the Department of Education's Ready to Learn program for "educational public media content for our nation's youngest learners" and \$20 million for infrastructure and interconnection.

CPB allots \$377 million to public television stations. Another \$126 million goes to public radio stations. National Public Radio long has engaged in verbal money laundering, claiming its "direct operating costs" rely on low single-digit percentage amounts of federal money. However, cash from CPB and programming and other fees paid to NPR by federal, state and local government-subsidized public stations cover an estimated 25 percent or more of NPR's budget.

Lamborn thinks now is the time to defund public broadcasting. In 2021, he introduced two separate bills – one to remove the federal feeding trough for public broadcasting in general, the other specifically to cut NPR's umbilical cord.

Of course, Lamborn has thought the time ripe to end federal largesse for public television and radio since 2010, and has introduced legislation to that effect in each new Congress since then. Republicans holding a 222-212 majority in the new House of Representatives, with a special

election pending to fill one vacancy, the Colorado Republican might see his measure pass the lower chamber.

Democrats typically favor public broadcasting more than Republicans do, so approval by the Senate – 48 Democrats and three independents (Bernie Sanders [VT], Angus King [ME] and now Krysten Sinema [AZ]) who caucus with the Democrats – seems doubtful. Nevertheless, a House vote to defund public broadcasting would be a shot across public TV and radio's bow. It could set the stage for adoption by the full Congress should the GOP keep its House majority and take the Senate in 2024.

There's no reason Lamborn and any co-sponsors he recruits should desist from the struggle. Perseverance matters. Rome's Cato the Elder ended every Senate speech, regardless of the subject, with "Carthago delenda est [Carthage must be destroyed]!" Eventually, it was.

■ **Breaking the Law**

CPB's fiscal 2023 budget of \$611 million amounts to just 0.11 percent of federal outlays totaling \$5.8 trillion. But since Washington is running a \$1.2 trillion deficit, cuts wherever found would seem to be in order.

However, there are at least two other reasons to eliminate appropriations for public broadcasting, NPR in particular:

- It chronically violates the federal statute that governs public broadcasting.
- It doesn't need taxpayers' money anyway.

The antecedents of contemporary public broadcasting were small. Supporters pushed the Telecommunications Act of 1967 largely as a means to enable what was called educational television to reach

remote rural areas. Like most government-subsidized agencies, however, its self-justifications have grown in keeping with its budget. On congressional passage of CPB's current allocation, Patricia Harrison president and chief operating officer, asserted:

Public media is a valued resource providing information and lifelong learning for millions of Americans in rural and urban communities through broadcasts and on the platforms of their choosing. ... Americans listen to public radio's local reporting and NPR's national and international news and watch public television local public affairs shows and PBS's nightly national news programs to get the trusted information they need to navigate our modern world. This funding allows the public media system to continue to provide fact-based journalism that informs and educates Americans.

In theory, anyway. It turns out government-subsidized "fact-based journalism" is in the eye and the ear of the recipients of those funds, not necessarily the viewer or listener.

The Telecommunications Act of 1967, as amended in 1992 requires of all CPB fund recipients "strict adherence to objectivity and balance in all programs or series of programs of a controversial nature." Yet, neither NPR, PBS, nor CPB ever established procedures to monitor adherence to or violation of the objectivity and balance standard.

For decades, ombudsmen, inspector generals' reports, and rare instances of congressional oversight have come and gone. But in introducing his 2021 NPR and CPB defunding proposals, Lamborn

accused public radio and PBS of “forcing a socially progressive viewpoint on its audience.”

■ *Self-Censoring the News*

He noted, for example, that NPR had refused to cover the Hunter Biden laptop story. Highlighted by *The New York Post*, this was news that e-mails on the wayward presidential son’s forgotten laptop intimated a Biden family enrichment scheme via Ukraine and China, while Joe Biden was vice president.

But NPR’s executive managing editor for news, Terence Samuel, declared coverage “would be a waste of time.” Kelly McBride, the network’s “public editor,” tried to justify the decision to censor by raising doubts about the laptop story that already had been dispelled. Nevertheless, the “socially progressive” network was early – and repeatedly – on the trail of former President Donald Trump’s alleged violations of the constitution’s emoluments clause.

Republicans weren’t always alone in hearing NPR’s objectivity and balance violations. In 2003, during anti-Israel Palestinian terrorism marking the second intifada, 11 House Democrats, led by Reps. Eliot Engel (NY) and Brad Sherman (CA) wrote the network’s then-president, Kevin Klose:

[F]or many years, National Public Radio programs have presented a view of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that is too often biased against Israel. ... [D]espite concerns raised over the years by listeners, members of NPR affiliate stations, and members of Congress, NPR coverage of the Middle East – to our ears and the ears of many of our constituents – still exhibits a slanted perspective on the conflict.

(Disclosure: This writer, then Washington director of CAMERA, the Committee for Accuracy in Middle East Reporting and Analysis, helped provide examples for the Engel-Sherman letter.)

In corporate damage-control, NPR then hired two public relations firms and sent Klose on a speaking tour to Jewish audiences. But as to anti-Israel bias, nothing has changed. According to the Boston-based, 65,000-member CAMERA, November’s Israeli elections that resulted in the likelihood of Benjamin Netanyahu returning as prime minister with a government including right-wing and Jewish religious parties sparked repeated NPR coverage. Network correspondents expressed “concern” and “foreboding” over Israel’s future and its relations with the United States.

“NPR stories routinely depict Palestinians as victims of a rapacious and violent Jewish regime without agency of their own,” and the December 6 “All Things Considered” broadcast and “Consider This” podcast were no different, wrote CAMERA analyst Ricki Hollander. “Host Juana Summers began with ‘the most combustible place on earth,’ which she identified as ‘the al-Aqsa Mosque compound,’ using Palestinian Authority-mandated terminology to describe the site. With no mention that this is Judaism’s holiest site” – long and widely recognized as the Temple Mount – and by referring to it exclusively in Arabic terms, “the implication is that the Muslim claim to the site supersedes the Jewish one,” Hollander noted.

Correspondent Daniel Estrin then added, “whenever we’ve seen that Palestinians perceive Israelis are encroaching on this site, we’ve seen violence, and that violence spreads.” Concluded Hollander, “it’s ironic that this segment was broadcast at the same time NPR fundraisers were promoting the network as an ‘unbiased’ source of news.”

■ *Chronic Bias*

Such two-dimensional, pro-Palestinian coverage of Arab-Israeli news is unchanged since before the second intifada. What has changed is pro-Israel congressional Democrats’ reluctance to

challenge their party’s anti-Zionist left, the attitudes of which echo on National Public Radio.

In a straitened market in which a commercial news outlet like CNN (Cable News Network) recently laid off 200 employees, NPR’s news operations could survive without CPB’s – that is, without taxpayers’ – money. In 2003, the estate of Joan Kroc – widow of McDonald’s Corp. founder Ray Kroc – left NPR more than \$200 million.

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation periodically gift the network, as in 2016, with \$4 million to support its investigative and international reporting. Then there was the scandal – quickly forgotten – of NPR taking \$100,000 from the pro-Iran nuclear deal Ploughshares Foundation for coverage of ... the Iran nuclear deal.

NPR’s ombudsman at the time sanitized the transaction without explaining why a partisan like Ploughshares repeatedly found the network worth subsidizing.

In addition, the Ford, Wallace, Knight, and Bill and Melinda Gates foundations have dumped tens of millions into NPR. So have corporate backers from State Farm Insurance to Holland America Cruise Line.

As to the original justification for public, then “educational” broadcasting, the problem for viewers and listeners in the digital, Interneted age – even those in rural areas – may be a surplus of media to sort through, not too few. If Rep. Lamborn’s crusade eventually proves successful, it will not only have nicked the federal budget behemoth, it also will have upheld the law. Objectivity and balance, that is, the real journalism NPR pretends to dispense, demand it.

ERIC ROZENMAN *is communications consultant for the Jewish Policy Center. Early in his career, he worked for Ohio State University’s NPR affiliate, WOSU-FM. This is an updated, expanded version of “Defund NPR,” Washington Times, Aug. 25, 2021.*

“The Public Still has a Big Center”

An *in*FOCUS interview with Sen. NORM COLEMAN

Norm Coleman served as Republican Senator for Minnesota from 2003 to 2009, prior to which he was elected mayor of Saint Paul in 1994 as a member of the Democratic–Farmer–Labor Party; he became a Republican in 1996. Sen. Coleman received his BA from Hofstra University and his JD From the University of Iowa. He presently chairs the Republican Jewish Coalition and the American Action Network. *in*FOCUS Quarterly Editor Shoshana Bryen spoke with him recently.

***in*FOCUS QUARTERLY: SENATOR, IF YOU WERE THE INCOMING SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE, WHAT WOULD YOUR THREE TOP PRIORITIES BE?**

Sen. Coleman: Americans are concerned about inflation, the border, crime – and number one, the economy. Republicans ran on those issues; Democrats didn’t. If you’re the Speaker, you got to jump on those from the start.

You can’t change policy right away, but I think you’ll see strong statements about the border. You’ll see strong actions coming from the House about supporting our police and fighting crime. Strong actions to cut down on reckless spending. The good news about having a Republican Speaker of the House is that the days of tax increases and multi-trillion dollar reconciliation packages are gone.

***iF:* HOW WILL YOU FIND AGREEMENT?**

Sen. Coleman: People talk about the narrow majority that the Republican Congress has, the Speaker has, but, in fact, it is similar to what the Democrats had the last cycle. The point is the Chair, and we have the Chair. The Republican Congress has an opportunity, then.

The root cause of inflation has been reckless spending. Congress has to send the signal that the days of tossing money at problems is over. The Republican

Congress has to take a very strong stand on spending.

On immigration, it’s important for the House Republicans to let the voters know that they heard their concerns, so among the first things would be a strong statement about illegal immigration.

There is, actually, an opportunity for some bipartisan action on immigration. I believe some Democrat members of Congress – in both the Senate and the House, particularly in border states – recognize that their constituents are not happy with the flood of illegal immigrants, the flood of fentanyl, and the human factors in terms of those people who are trying to get into the country.

***iF:* THE HOUSE IS DIVIDED ALMOST IN HALF. DOES MEAN THERE IS A CENTER? OR IS IT THAT ALL THE REPUBLICANS ARE CONSERVATIVE, AND ALL THE DEMOCRATS ARE LIBERAL?**

Sen. Coleman: I remember looking at a chart years ago and seeing that 66 percent of the Congress defined itself as “in the middle.” You actually had a large group of Democrats who were more conservative than liberal Republicans. You had a large group of Republicans who were more liberal than conservative Democrats. Today, that number is just about zero. The parties are more partisan and more divided. The public, I think, still has a big center.

But the House operates in a winner-take-all manner. It’s different than the Senate. I’m a product of the Senate. The reason you keep the filibuster is because you need to get to 60 votes. When I was elected, I was the 51st Republican, but we needed to get to 60. The Senate, even divided as it is today, still has a little bit more of that “looking for allies.”

The House is going to be more challenging for a center to operate with the very strong partisan divide. And the House, by its very nature, makes it difficult to kind of come together in a bipartisan fashion.

***iF:* LET’S GO TO ENERGY. THE PRESIDENT HAS DRAWN DOWN MORE THAN A THIRD OF THE STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVE. CAN WE REFILL THE RESERVE WITH DOMESTIC OR CANADIAN OIL? AND CAN WE BRING THE KEYSTONE PIPELINE BACK?**

Sen. Coleman: We have to get back to America being energy independent; get back to domestic oil production; get back to having pipelines with Canada for the free flow of oil and natural gas. One of the things that has seriously hurt the economy and hurt America’s national security, is the president’s immediate move away from carbon fuels.

We were literally energy independent, and we still have the capacity to be

the world's largest producer of energy, passing everybody.

The administration was – and is – catering to environmental extremism, not the center of America. The center of America would say, “Let’s do it all. Let’s do renewables. Let’s do cleaner energy. Let’s do wind and solar where it makes sense. But let’s also do American production, American natural gas, American oil. Let’s do Keystone.”

But America is being stymied by this administration kowtowing at the altar of a Green New Deal that is not helping the American economy. It is not helping the American worker; it is not good for American national security.

iF: WELL, THAT’S DEPRESSING.

Sen. Coleman: Reality is a tough thing. When you don’t control the presidency and you only control one body of Congress, it makes it really tough to make the change that, I have no doubt, most Americans understand.

iF: MIGHT THERE BE A CONSENSUS IN CONGRESS FOR MORE MILITARY SPENDING OR DIFFERENT WAYS OF SPENDING OUR MILITARY RESOURCES?

Sen. Coleman: There is some cause for optimism in the area of military spending. A bipartisan majority understands that we have to have a strong military. I think some of President Biden’s foreign policy choices make it difficult. But the president submitted a budget to Congress and Congress came back and put more into the military than the president asked for.

Between [Democrat] Jack Reed and ranking Republican member Roger Wicker on Armed Services Committee, I think we have an opportunity for Congress to tell the administration, “You’re not doing enough. Your policy choices are not the right choices.” That’s the Armed Services side, but the question of foreign policy is more challenging.



Norm Coleman

Democrats are not apt to buck the president. He’s been talking about and trying to get back into a nuclear deal with the Iranians. President Trump wisely, wisely said, “We’re getting out of this.”

The Iran deal was a disaster when President Obama did it. It was done without putting any limitations on the Iranians, neither on ballistic missiles nor on their malign activities around the world; they are the largest state sponsor of terrorism. They control Hamas, Hezbollah, the Houthis in Yemen, and Shiite militias in Iraq. They control five regional capitals.

Unfortunately, Democrats in Congress have not shown the backbone to challenge the president enough on this. And I do fear what happens until we get a change in administration. America is still the world’s greatest power. We’re still Ronald Reagan’s beacon; the shining city on the hill. But I do think that the policies of this president are weakening America in the world.

Our friends are not sure they can trust us, and our enemies feel emboldened.

All sides in Israel tell us that the Iran deal is an existential threat. Iran getting a nuclear weapon is an existential threat to the Jewish state. I do fear what can happen with poor American leadership. But again, I’m a great believer in the resiliency of America. We have overcome weak presidents and bad presidents in the past.

iF: DO YOU THINK THE EXECUTION OF PROTESTORS IN IRAN – OR THE DRONES IRAN SHARED WITH RUSSIA FOR USE IN UKRAINE – MIGHT CHANGE THE VIEW EITHER OF CONGRESS OR IN THE WHITE HOUSE?

Sen. Coleman: The Obama theory was that if we were just nice to the Iranians, if we gave them money, if we did a deal, they would come back and be a responsible member in the community of nations. But that is not who they are. These are thugs, these are tyrants.

It’s hard for the administration to turn a blind eye to what you’re seeing now with Russia, what you’re seeing in

the streets of Iran. As a result, there's been a bit of slowing in this effort and an understanding that if we go back into a deal, we have to do something about broader malign activities.

iF: THROW CHINA IN AS A MALIGN INFLUENCE. IS THERE A BIPARTISAN WAY FOR CONGRESS TO APPROACH CHINA?

Sen. Coleman: If there's one issue today on which there is bipartisan agreement, not 100 percent, but bipartisan support, it is dealing with the threat of China – militarily, economically, and from an intellectual property perspective. TikTok, Huawei, etc.

China is where I think you can get something done. One of the first things that Speaker-to-be, Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) will do is appoint Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-WI) to take the lead on a China-focused effort in the House: to deal with the military, economic, intellectual property, and other threats.

There is a clear focus on the Republican side and there is some support from Democrats, so this should be an area in which we can confront the threats we face today from China.

iF: CAN WE DETER CHINA FROM INVADING TAIWAN, OR DEFEAT CHINA IF IT DID ATTACK?

Sen. Coleman: The relationship and between the U.S. and Taiwan today is stronger than it has ever been. And most people I talk to agree that strong support for Taiwan is necessary. My big fear is that Xi [Jinping, Communist Party leader of China] looked at Afghanistan and said, "Oh, look how they dealt with Afghanistan – Taiwan is probably ripe for the picking."

The perception is out there. The broad American response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, in part, has been motivated by a sense that if we don't hold the line here, Taiwan will be gone.

If Xi thinks the U.S. can't deal with

Putin or couldn't deal with Taliban, he'll think he has free rein to do what he wants with Taiwan. I don't think that's the case now. I think the response to Ukraine put a brake on it. But there would be a huge challenge if the Chinese were to move on Taiwan.

But ultimately you have to decide, is there order in the world? Where is the line?

iF: LET'S SEE IF WE CAN GET ONE MORE BIPARTISAN BIT OUT OF THIS. THERE'S BEEN A DRAMATIC INCREASE IN ANTISEMITISM IN THIS COUNTRY. WHY NOW? AND IS THERE IS ANYTHING THAT CONGRESS CAN DO ABOUT IT?

Sen. Coleman: Actually, I don't necessarily think that it's increasing; I think it's always been. If anything, we see it more and that may be a function of social media, which makes everything instant and connected.

At the same time, it is getting worse – demonstrably worse – on college campuses. If you are a young Jewish student today who cares about Israel, you probably are in fear of articulating that. You're in fear of saying it in a class where your professor is saying that Israel is an "apartheid state." You're afraid of saying it in a student group if your group will be banned or barred from participating in student activities. The real cesspool of antisemitism today is on American college campuses.

head in the BDS [boycott, divest and sanctions] movement. BDS is antisemitism. It seeks the destruction of the Jewish state.

On the Republican side of the aisle, I have to say I hope a former president never again has dinner with a Nazi. But in Congress the loudest voices of antisemitism today are in the Democratic Party – Rashida Tlaib, Ilhan Omar, and the Squad.

But it transcends politics; it has always been with us. We have to confront it and say we will not tolerate it.

iF: IN CONGRESS, THE PEOPLE YOU MENTIONED WOULD TELL YOU THEY'RE NOT ANTISEMITIC. THEY JUST DON'T LIKE THE POLICIES OF THE STATE OF ISRAEL. HOW DO YOU SEE CONGRESS IN TERMS OF ITS HISTORIC PRO-ISRAEL TENDENCIES?

Sen. Coleman: Israel benefits from broad bipartisan support and there is still some of that, but on the Democrat side, there is less. The reality is that "I stand with Israel," is an applause line at a Republican rally, but at a Democrat base rally, I don't think the member of Congress would say it because it would not be well received. Polling shows that Democrat base support for Israel has been severely diminished, seriously weakened by the emergence of the progressive movement in the Democrat party.

If you are a young Jewish student today who cares about Israel, you probably are in fear of articulating that.

I don't have the answer, but I do believe social media makes it easy to spit that garbage out and for it to be circulated among like-minded idiots.

And antisemitism rears its ugly

I would hope that it not be a partisan issue, but it is challenging in that at least in one party, the base continues to move more and more away from support of the Jewish state. But they have to be

challenged and not get away with the excuse, “It’s just policies of Netanyahu that we don’t like.”

iF: THE ADMINISTRATION HAS SAID IF PRIME MINISTER-DESIGNATE BENJAMIN NETANYAHU PUTS CERTAIN PEOPLE IN HIS NEW GOVERNMENT, THE U.S. WON’T TALK TO THAT PERSON. DOES THIS LEND CONGRESS COVER FOR THINGS LIKE SAYING, “WELL, WE DON’T WANT TO GIVE ISRAEL SECURITY ASSISTANCE, OR WE DON’T WANT TO DO JOINT EXERCISES, OR WHATEVER.”

Sen. Coleman: It’s a bad policy, start with that. Does it have an impact on Congress? Yes, it makes it easier for some to then enact policies that undermine Israel’s security and undermines the strength of the bilateral relationship. I don’t think it destroys it. There is still a measure of bipartisan support for Israel in the Congress that is strong enough at this point to overcome many of those things. I just worry about the direction and the strength of the so-called progressives. Not every progressive, by the way, is anti-Israel. Richie Torres (D-NY), right? A few are real progressives, but they recognize the importance of our ally, Israel.

The good news in the Arab world is that the relationship with Israel is changing. The Abraham Accords were a monumental feat, and the impact is continuing to grow.

Oddly, some of the policies of Obama and the Iran deal actually were an opportunity for Israel to connect with some of its neighbors in ways it couldn’t in the past. Obama was talking to the Iranians, wasn’t talking to the Israelis, the Saudis or United Arab Emirates about the nuclear deal. Those countries appear to have decided, “Hey, we need each other, and let’s figure out a way to work together.”

Then the Trump administration came in and made the Abraham Accords possible. Suddenly, you’re

seeing phenomenal energy in the region.

There is a change in the Middle East in terms of Israel’s relations with its neighbors at the people-to-people level. There is also an understanding that Israel’s neighbors want to tap into Israel technology. The idea of a region that would have Saudi capital and access to markets, and UAE financial platforms, along with Israeli technology, well, that would be a pretty powerful force.

iF: MAYBE SOME OF THAT ENERGY AND GOODWILL WILL REACH CONGRESS AND PEOPLE WILL SAY, “YOU KNOW WHAT? WE DON’T WANT TO STEP ON THIS. WE DON’T WANT TO DIVERT IT.”

Sen. Coleman: Agreed. There are a lot of problems that really difficult – China, Russia. But there are some areas where folks are finding common ground, and that would be in the Middle East right now. I keep coming back to the Abraham Accords because they were so powerful.

I keep coming back to the Abraham Accords because they were so powerful. Initially, everything I was seeing from the Biden people was indifferent at best – I think that’s totally changed right now.

Initially, everything I was seeing from the Biden people was indifferent at best – I think that’s totally changed right now.

That does have an impact on Congress, making it easier then to do things that support Israel because it’s seen as being in the U.S. interest to have some more security and stability in the Middle East. That’s in our own security and national interest.

iF: LET’S GO BACK TO A DOMESTIC SUBJECT. PEOPLE TALK ABOUT ONSHORING KEY INDUSTRIES AND KEY COMPONENTS, NOT TO HAVE ALL

OF OUR MANUFACTURING IN THE HANDS OF CHINA, NOT TO HAVE EVERYTHING OVERSEAS. CAN WE DO THAT WITH THE SHORTAGES IN THE WORKFORCE, OR DOES IT ASK US TO CONSIDER INCREASED LEGAL IMMIGRATION?

Sen. Coleman: First, it is critically important to onshore certain production manufacturing that is vital to our national security. Pharmaceuticals – we’ve seen the impact of COVID. Rare earth minerals for 5G technology and other things. Semiconductor chips. Our world today is run on semiconductor chips and there are very few American domestic manufacturers. We have to figure out a better way of dealing with the supply chain that doesn’t make us vulnerable because things critical to national security are being produced elsewhere.

We have to make it economically feasible for folks to operate in this country. That was always the problem, it’s so much cheaper to do it in China. Let’s

figure out how to make it economically viable for them to exist in the US.

The second part of your question is how do we ensure that we have the workers to handle the production of these critical, critical manufacturing operations? I’m a big supporter of legal immigration. I would think, across the aisle are others who are supporters of legal immigration.

It’s in our economic interest to have legal immigration. We obviously want to make sure we’re not displacing Americans, but I do not think that’s the case. We have to figure out a way to



U.S. Army Corps of Engineers South Pacific Border District contractor crews place barrier panel along the U.S.-Mexico border near Yuma, Arizona. (Photo: Orville Collins)

control our borders, have people here contribute to our national security and economy. I think all that's doable.

iF: HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT CHINESE CITIZENS WORKING AND STUDYING IN THIS COUNTRY? WE'VE COME TO UNDERSTAND THAT THEY ARE, IN MANY WAYS, A SECURITY THREAT.

Sen. Coleman: It's tough because it goes back to the benefit. You do have to deal with the national security issues and people may disagree, but I would hate to totally cut off Chinese students from studying here.

This goes to the question of whether Americans are becoming more isolationist.

iF: THAT WAS MY NEXT QUESTION.

Sen. Coleman: As we focus on America, does it mean we become more isolationist? That we shouldn't worry about what's happened in the Ukraine because we've got bridges that are falling down here, and we have domestic problems?

I hope the answer is no. Is there an element of that within both parties? Yes. This is oftentimes where, by the way, the left, far left and right come together.

I think America is the greatest nation in the world. God's blessing has shined upon us from our creation; from the genius of our Founders to what we've done historically.

My dad was 18 or 19 years old on the Omaha Beach on D-Day. He made his way through Europe, liberating a concentration camp along the way. If you go to places that were liberated by American grace and American blood you know we don't fight to seize land. That's been our history and I think it's a glorious history.

What I fear about the left is that it denigrates America. President Obama's apology tour and all those things that take away from how the rest of the world views America.

I do fear that rather loud element within the party that doesn't understand the importance of America being the world's strongest power, being the country that people turn to and finding

us there for them. If America is involved with other nations so that they lift themselves up, the world is safer, and that stability adds to our national security.

I'm passionate about this subject because I do worry. It is so easy for a person sitting in Northern Minnesota worried about paying for electricity or heat, worried about their jobs or their kids' healthcare, to wonder, "What are we doing in Ukraine?"

We have to say that we are not isolated and can't be. What happens in a place called Wuhan, China, has an impact around the world. We need to understand that we need to be prepared to respond in an appropriate fashion.

iF: LAST TIME WE WERE IN THIS DOMESTIC POSITION, HIGH INFLATION, AND HIGH ENERGY PRICES, RONALD REAGAN, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE MESS, MADE US BELIEVE EXACTLY WHAT YOU SAID, THAT WE STILL NEEDED TO BE OUT THERE IN THE WORLD DOING OUR THING. IS THERE A REAGAN THERE FOR US?

Sen. Coleman: This is part of the American character. This is who we are and I'm just praying we never lose it. I worry then about our education system. I worry about this kind of "woke mentality" that seems to be capturing at least the big institutions in Big Tech and big business. I have some concern that somehow, we may lose sight of that magnificent vision that Reagan had.

This is where I'm the optimist – I think it's still in our character.

There are people who love this country, who take pride in our country, want to serve our country. It is part of our character. I think in 2024, we're going to have an opportunity to move forward with better leadership and better direction than the country is getting today.

iF: SENATOR COLEMAN, THANK YOU FOR A TERRIFIC ENCAPSULATION OF OUR PROBLEMS AND AMERICA'S ABILITY TO MEET THE CHALLENGES.

Combat the Inflation Reduction Act's Central Planning

by **DAREN BAKST** and **RICHARD STERN**

On August 16, 2022, President Joe Biden signed the so-called Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) into law. This sweeping legislation was jammed through Congress on a purely partisan basis through the budget reconciliation process to bypass the Senate filibuster. Not a single Republican in the House or Senate voted in favor of its passage.

Over the next 10 years, the IRA will likely increase federal deficits and increase taxes by \$570 billion, according to calculations from the Heritage Foundation – with the average middle-income family seeing a tax hike of more than \$2,400. It is yet another example of irresponsible government spending and taxation that will exacerbate inflation, which is already at levels not seen in 40 years.

A central aspect of the IRA is the litany of “Green New Deal” policies that use government intervention to influence how energy is produced and consumed in the United States. The law diverts taxpayer dollars into unreliable electricity sources, like solar and wind, while sending a clear signal that reliable electricity sources, like natural gas, are disfavored. The law aggressively uses the levers of government to influence what vehicles Americans drive, getting them out of gas and diesel-powered vehicles and into electric vehicles (EVs), and even pushes consumers away from natural gas appliances to electric appliances.

These are just some examples of the IRA's climate and energy provisions, estimated to cost \$369 billion over the next 10 years. This cost is only part of

the picture. The subsidies and other governmental intervention will be used to tip the scales and leverage the transition of investment dollars out of productive enterprises and into those that are inefficient, yet politically favored.

Lawmakers supporting the bill have apparently decided that to achieve their vision for a “clean energy” future, they should engage in one of the most heavy-handed central planning campaigns in American history.

For conservatives and anyone concerned with the radical energy provisions in the law, including its effort to push inefficient and unreliable electrification, the key question is: what should be done to undo the damage this law will create? These provisions are not merely troubling due to their costs.

In fact, more important by far is how the new law could set up a permanent path away from having access

favor of policy that recognizes the critical importance of affordable and reliable energy and freedom.

■ *Climate and Energy Provisions in the IRA*

The “green” provisions within the IRA are the major component of this law, and include numerous grants, tax credits, loans, and other government meddling into energy production and usage. The following are just some of these egregious provisions:

The “Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund.” The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has \$27 billion to spend until September 30, 2024 to hand out allegedly “competitive” grants on, among other things, financial and technical assistance for projects that reduce or avoid greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and the deployment of zero-emission technologies. This massive influx of money

For conservatives and anyone concerned with the radical energy provisions in the law, including its effort to push inefficient and unreliable electrification, the key question is: what should be done to undo the damage this law will create?

to the affordable energy necessary for prosperity and the freedom Americans expect and deserve. This dangerous path needs to be blocked and conservatives should make it perfectly clear that the IRA is not the new normal. It is instead an aberration that will be dismantled in

affords the EPA wide discretion in how to spend the money and who it should fund. As a result, it is ripe for abuse.

The EV Push. Despite decades of subsidies, according to Department of Energy data, electric vehicles constituted only 0.5 percent of all vehicles registered



President Biden signs H.R. 5376, the “Inflation Reduction Act of 2022.” (Photo: White House)

in 2021. EV sales in 2021 accounted for fewer than 5 percent of overall vehicle sales. The vehicles have numerous problems, including limited range and higher costs than gas-powered cars, and are typically purchased by wealthy households. The reality is most Americans rely on gasoline to power their cars.

Yet, the IRA goes all in on EVs to help change the vehicle fleet, regardless of the effect on the electricity grid or basic respect for allowing Americans to choose freely what vehicles to drive. The legislation includes EV tax credits and grants to retool auto manufacturing plants to manufacture clean vehicles and up to \$20 billion in loans to build “clean vehicle” manufacturing facilities. Subsidies for so-called “clean vehicles” represent a blatant wealth redistribution from low- and middle-income families to the wealthy. These programs will pay automakers to stop producing reliable and affordable cars. This will add to the financial burdens of most Americans in order to subsidize the corporate interests

taking advantage of this “green” agenda.

Agricultural Practices. The bill would provide more than \$20 billion to support “climate-smart agricultural practices,” with funding going to five U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) conservation programs. The USDA has indicated that the money for the conservation programs will help farmers implement conservation practices to reduce GHG emission. This is yet another step by some policymakers to push specific agricultural practices onto American farmers.

Punishing Conventional Fuel. The IRA is not all carrots. When it comes to disfavored energy sources, it brings out the sticks. For example, the legislation would increase the costs for oil and gas drilling by increasing the royalties companies have to pay for offshore drilling from 12.5 percent to 16.66 percent (and as high as 18.75 percent), and for onshore oil drilling from 12.5 percent to 16.66 percent. It also includes a methane emissions fee for petroleum and natural

gas companies. Unavoidably, these costs will be borne by the American people through slower wage and economic growth and higher consumer prices.

■ **How to Counter the IRA**

The next Congress will see divided government, making it difficult for legislators who opposed the IRA to undo the law. However, conservatives should not lose sight of the critical need to fully repeal the IRA and take whatever steps they can to make this happen. In the short-term, there may not be significant results, but taking action now can help set the stage for bigger changes to come.

From the outset, conservatives should make it perfectly clear to those who are pushing these misguided policies, including this national electrification plan, that these policies will be short-lived. For those who seek to financially benefit from this plan, they should know they rely upon these ill-gotten subsidies at their own peril. For firms receiving the IRA “green” subsidies, they

should know the spigot will be turned off as soon as conservatives control the government.

Conservatives should make it clear that they will not support bailouts for businesses that change their practices

Conservatives should do what they can to block the distribution of even previously appropriated money if it has not been spent yet.

to chase federal subsidies, such as by expanding the production of EVs, while significantly reducing the manufacture of gas-powered vehicles. Conservatives should stress that they will not support the government being complicit in fostering corporate cronyism and increasing energy and transportation costs for Americans. Plus, there will absolutely be no bailouts for other businesses that put most or all of their eggs in the “green” electrification basket.

At the start of the 118th Congress, conservatives should pass a resolution codifying some basic principles. For example, they should state that:

- Affordable and reliable energy should be a top priority. The federal government should remove government-created obstacles to achieving this goal and unleash America’s energy potential.
- The government will not pick winners and losers when it comes to energy, nor will it intervene to try to influence or dictate how energy is produced or consumed.
- American families rely upon affordable energy, and policies that drive up energy prices hurt Americans and are regressive, therefore especially hurting lower-income households.

■ Oversight

Proper oversight of the IRA’s implementation must be a top priority. This will include hearings and doing what is necessary to promote transparency. However, a congressional check on how

the IRA is implemented should not stop there. Conservatives should pass legislation to require that “slush funds” ripe for abuse like the EPA GHG fund cannot give out money prior to congressional review and approval. This goes beyond

simply protecting against abuse. The law’s sweeping delegation of spending authority is problematic from a separation of powers perspective.

In terms of how the money is spent, there must be clear and detailed legislative prohibitions on conflicts-of-interest and using any of the money to assist non-profits (or others) for litigation or lobbying of any kind. The IRA’s hypocrisy is evident in the pro-labor union provisions within the legislation that come at the expense of the alleged “green” agenda. For example, many of the law’s tax credits provide a 5-fold increase in the size of the credit for firms that comply with specific parameters. These favors to unions should be repealed.

The burdens of the numerous federal favors within the IRA will fall on the American people. The volume of spending and tax increases of this law will add to the financial hardships of Americans and the precarious fiscal position of the federal government.

Unfortunately, some of the money will be effectively “out the door” even at the start of 2023. However, conservatives should do what they can to block the distribution of even previously appropriated money if it has not been spent yet.

Funds that have been appropriated and not spent exist only as a credit allowance for a particular federal program – that credit limit can always be rescinded. In the case of the IRA, a conservative Congress should use its power of the

purse to demand that unspent budget authority from the IRA be rescinded. Congress should ensure that, at a minimum, funding levels that are not rescinded should have guardrails put up to limit their use and scope. Congress must ensure transparent and proper reporting and hearings on these funds before they go out the door.

Most of the IRA’s green spending is not expected to go “out the door” until 2025 and later. If conservatives do have a better governing position at that time, then they quite simply should repeal the IRA. Just as the IRA itself was created through a budget reconciliation process, repeal of the law could be as well.

■ Conclusion

The best way to undo the IRA is a fluid question the answer to which will change depending on numerous factors, but the goal of getting rid of this bad policy is not fluid. Tomorrow, like today, the IRA will be misguided and arrogant policy that presumes government should dictate energy production and consumption.

As time passes, there may be some of today’s opponents of the IRA who will just surrender and look to fight new battles. Energy is simply too important though for Americans and across the economy to allow the IRA to stand.

Conservatives should recognize that unless the IRA is dismantled and its approach to energy policy firmly rejected, the path the Democrats set through their bill will have negative consequences until the course is reversed. This is a pivotal moment for our nation’s prosperity and the freedom of its people. Conservatives need to fight and get this nation back on a course of energy abundance and, as a result, a path to a flourishing and innovative future.

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Power to the People: Including over Their Health Care

by **KATY TALENTO**

America's consumer economy puts customers first; our health care system does not. Patients and caregivers navigate restrictive hours, paid parking garages, outpatient procedures at labyrinthine hospital complexes, small print on forms that demand we sign away our financial rights, hoarding of medical records, the impossibility of reaching our doctor by phone, appointment backlogs, the bureaucratic, DMV-like runaround when seeking straight answers to clinical or billing questions and more.

Many Americans just accept that suboptimal health care is here to stay. Thus, we acquiesce to more tests, more procedures, more drugs, and more in-person visits. But is "more" the same as "better?" Or are we prolonging the grueling cycle for sick patients who need answers and relief from their ailments?

A fifth of our economy is devoted to health care. The data show that we're not getting what we bargained for. Costs dramatically outpace inflation and wage growth.

And then there's the crushing, unaffordable, out-of-pocket costs that make everyone think twice before seeking care. Once they do, they live in fear of secret prices, crippling medical bills, and predatory collectors.

A fifth of our economy is devoted

to health care. The data show that we're not getting what we bargained for. Costs dramatically outpace inflation and wage growth. The Institute of Medicine estimates that a third of our health care dollars are wasted on overtreatment or undertreatment, bureaucracy, and fraud.

When the new Congress takes office in January, lawmakers will have an opportunity to shift more power back to patients. Rather than bowing to insurance and hospital elites who see sick people as revenue streams, the 118th Congress could flip the narrative.

■ **Ensure Price Transparency**

Significant progress was made in the past few years in exposing secret pricing in health care, but much more needs to be done. The Trump administration pushed forward a series of regulations, including one that directed hospitals to ensure that

patients/customers can see in advance what they're being charged for specific services. The Biden administration, to its credit, embraced the regulation in principle. However, it has been lax in enforcing it. Congress should use its funding power to encourage executive branch action.

Pro-patient price transparency has bipartisan congressional and wide popular support, giving Congress rare political cover to do the right thing by enacting tougher penalties for noncompliance. Only one in five hospitals fully discloses its prices. Even worse, a crucial part of another Trump-era regulation that required insurers to fully divulge prescription drug prices was indefinitely delayed by the Biden administration. The only way to re-align the broken system of incentives in health care is for hidden money games to be exposed so that consumers – patients, their employers, unions, and taxpayers – can start to pay for real value rather than empty promises on billboards featuring hospital or insurance carrier logos.

■ **Make Wellness Pay Off**

Tax treatment of health care costs is regressive, complicated, and unfair. Congress should consider legislation that makes every dollar spent on health and wellness tax-deductible for every family. Currently, people who get their insurance on the job have the best tax advantages. People with Health Savings Accounts get some tax deductibility, but only if they have a stingy, high-deductible insurance plan. But people who buy their own insurance, seniors on Medicare, or the uninsured can deduct their spending only if it reaches a certain percentage of their income, a threshold that's hard to attain in most cases.

This is wildly unfair. A procedural obstacle to legislation fixing this injustice is the Congressional Budget Office's "score" of tax deductions as "spending" by the government. But Congress should

ignore that nonsense – voters know well who is actually doing the spending when it comes to overpriced, essential health care, and it isn't the IRS.

■ **End Health Care Cartels**

For too long, states have let Big Hospitals and Big Insurance freeze out new market players.

- Existing hospitals have a stranglehold on state governments and lobby against the introduction of new hospitals that might bring competition and lower prices to their local markets. Congress could condition federal funding on ending so-called Certificate of Need laws that give hospitals veto power over the entrance of competitors to their markets. Congress also must reverse the Affordable Care Act's counterproductive ban on physician-owned hospitals – the very facilities that are most competitive and least bureaucratic.

- Americans have had enough of the status quo business model for financing health care, built on a handful of

Why should only employers be allowed to build the most competitive health plans? Americans must be allowed to organize their own risk-sharing pools and build the health plans they want. Congress should ignore the nannying federal and state bureaucrats who have long cried that only “bad” risk would be left for the government to subsidize if we let Americans make these decisions for themselves. The very definition of a safety net program is to help subsidize only those who are uninsurable, not to force the eminently insurable into government programs that triple their premiums in less than a decade.

■ **Fix Government Plans**

Today, the most bloated, expensive health plans are often those offered to federal, state, and local government workers. These plans, which should have the absolute lowest rates because of the size of their risk pools, are being plundered by the health care industry. As if American taxpayers weren't paying

have been adopting. Congress should direct the Office of Personnel Management to offer plans that use independent administrators, Direct Primary Care, value-based benefit design, price-transparency-driven incentives, and rationalized contracts for prescription drugs. Congress should impose the fiduciary obligations that govern private employer plans on these government plans as well.

■ **Free America – End Mandates**

The government is neither our parent nor our doctor; all medical mandates must end. Americans have a right to privacy, autonomy, and most importantly, freedom of conscience and informed consent. Congress needs to protect those rights in every context: workplace, schools, travel, everywhere. Existing nondiscrimination policies should be enforced, and penalties for noncompliance stiffened, to bar employers from charging higher premiums to health care consumers who exercise informed consent when it comes to medical procedures.

Any exercise of public health emergency measures, such as lockdowns, emergency use authorizations of drugs, diagnostics, or devices, building closures, mandates and the rest imposed on the public during a public health emergency should last no longer than three months unless approved by a majority of both houses of Congress.

Congress could tie federal funding to real informed consent on products that receive emergency authorization from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This would include the right to sue anyone who administers a medical product without informing consumers of the real risks and benefits. That must also mean that anyone who coerces Americans – without robust informed consent – under threat of loss of livelihood, medical license, educational enrollment, military service, access to health care treatment or organ transplant, or even access to public places could and should be liable for criminal

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insurance companies controlling life-and-death decisions for every family. There is more hunger than ever for innovative alternatives that re-align incentives, return power to patients and communities, and restore doctor-patient relationships. Congress could encourage self-funded, multi-state Association Health Plans (AHPs) regulated under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA).

enough for their own health care, they also have to pay for bad deals for public servants.

The federal health care plan that covers nine million workers and their families is one percent of the entire multi-trillion dollar federal budget. Federal workers' health insurance could easily be slashed 10 percent while improving benefits by using some of the innovations that self-funded employers



(Photo: Flickr/Images Money)

and civil penalties.

Congress must also ensure that doctors retain the long-held (but recently restricted) right to use their training and scientific judgment to prescribe off-label therapies with FDA-approved products if they and their patients choose to do so. Congress should withhold federal dollars from states, localities or even hospitals that fail to protect doctors trying to save patients in a public health emergency.

■ **Re-Engage Doctors**

During the COVID-19 crisis, the United States experienced a total breakdown of the public health surveillance system for vaccine-related injuries. The Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS) exploded with exponentially more reported injuries than from any other time period and all other vaccines in history, yet the medical and scientific mainstream simply ignored these reports. This apathy was enabled

by the public health authorities' refusal to engage with the reports, take them seriously, study them honestly, and inform the medical community of their implications for clinical practice.

Doctors may not even have known that their patients were injured or filed a report in the system. Doctors and nurses who did know about a vaccine injury were not required to report it (or, in many hospital systems, were prohibited from doing so). And manufacturers of vaccines, diagnostics, and other products failed to carry out studies of the real-world impact of the products in the market that were a condition of their FDA approval.

Equally important is unwinding dangerous messages sent to the public that, when it submits to the demands of public health authorities ostensibly charged with protecting them, there will be no recourse for them if they are the unlucky ones to be injured as a result. The next Congress should:

- Require any doctor or health care provider who has knowledge of a possible adverse event after a vaccine to report it to the VAERS system.
- Require the notification of doctors when their patients have an adverse event reported in the system.
- Withhold federal funds from any health care facility that attempts to coerce a doctor, nurse, or other provider to ignore, cover up, erase from patient records, or neglect to report vaccine-related adverse events.
- Require informed consent documents, package inserts and other communications for Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) products to incorporate the results of real-world VAERS and other publicly available surveillance data.
- Require the FDA to immediately pull the authority to market products from any manufacturer who fails to conduct the real-world studies on its products that were a condition of the EUA or FDA approval.

■ *Ensure Scientific Transparency*

If we are to restore the public trust that is the foundation of success for any public health policy, Congress needs to take transparency and accountability seriously when it comes to taxpayer-funded research and the data underlying

research data and findings available free to the public, including every bit of data that is submitted to the FDA as part of EUA or FDA approval process.

- End the cartel-like stranglehold of overpriced scientific journals keeping research findings paid for by the public behind pay-

forms or any Freedom of Information Act request that would delete payments from manufacturers, royalty payments, product or invention associated with the royalty payment.

■ *Congress' Rx list*

The health care industry is the largest activity in the American economy. Congress has a big to-do list to make it fair again for American patients and other purchasers of health care, and to restore trust in the public health enterprise. Fortunately, a growing number of doctors, nurses, patient advocates, and everyday Americans are demanding change. Although many special interests are at work, most people laboring in health care do so with good intentions. They do their duty in a system that's often demoralizing at best and cravenly corrupt at worst.

We can only pray that the 118th Congress understands the gravity of the moment and fights for the American people rather than the interests of hos-

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FDA approvals. The circumstances of the pandemic had researchers thinking that data the taxpayers paid to collect, analyze, and publish somehow belonged to them, their institutions, or journals that publish the results, not the public. The FDA actually went to court last year to fight to keep secret for the next 75 years the data it used to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of drugs, vaccines, and diagnostics that the agency unleashed on an unsuspecting public.

Under an EUA, manufacturers are shielded from any legal liability for harms caused by their products, no matter how grievous the injury or how reckless the manufacturer's behavior. The only way to tip the scales of power back in the right direction is for the public to have full and unfettered access to the data, so that patients can assess the risks and benefits for themselves prior to consenting to using such products. Finally, the advisory committees and other bodies that influence FDA and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) decisions must be free from conflicts of interest and undue influence by the industries they regulate. To set things right, Congress should:

- Codify into law the Biden executive order that would make taxpayer-funded

walls that cost thousands of dollars a year. The public must also have access to all raw data collected on the taxpayer dime so that other researchers can replicate or refute published findings or use the data to study other research questions.

Although many special interests are at work, most people laboring in health care do so with good intentions. They do their duty in a system that's often demoralizing at best and cravenly corrupt at worst.

- Prohibit the appointment of advisors to FDA and CDC advisory committees if they receive or have received funding from any manufacturer of a regulated product or with any product in development that would be subject to the FDA approval process.

- End royalty payments to government employees for any inventions that they participated in while on the government payroll.

- Prohibit any redactions on government employees' financial disclosure

pital and insurance executives. The groundwork is laid – all Congress needs to do is have the courage to enact meaningful, lasting reforms.

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A Deadlocked Congress Can't Ignore the Border

by JONATHAN TOBIN

The new Congress is faced with a security and humanitarian crisis at the border with Mexico. Given the almost complete breakdown of efforts to prevent illegal immigration in the last two years, dealing with this problem ought to be a priority for Washington.

Yet with divided government returning to Capitol Hill in the form of a new Republican majority in the House of Representatives that will thwart the Democratic-controlled Senate and White House and vice versa, the prospect of any major reform, whether in terms of the Democrats' goal of amnesty for illegal migrants or the Republican objective of regaining control of the border and sealing it off, is off the table.

While illegal border crossings have been a serious problem for decades, they have grown far worse since November 2020. As the *New York Times* first reported a month later, the election of a president who denigrated his predecessor's efforts to seal the border by increased enforcement of the laws and by building a wall to make crossing more difficult, called for "compassion" for those breaking those laws, and supported amnesty for those already in the United States, sent a clear signal. Those wishing to enter the country illegally took Joe Biden's victory as a signal to begin an explosion in illegal crossings.

That was followed by a series of policy decisions by Biden in which the "catch and release" policy former President Donald Trump had ended was resumed. Deportations slowed, apprehensions of illegals by the much-abused

Immigration and Customs Enforcement (I.C.E.) were largely halted and even the work of those beleaguered Border Police left to deal with the problem was unfairly smeared as brutal and prejudicial.

In the subsequent two years, the Biden administration, Congress, and much of the mainstream corporate media have largely ignored what some are not inaccurately describing as the moral equivalent of an "invasion" of the United States. The devastating impact this is having on both border communities and the rest of the country is such that the indifference to the issue cannot continue. That indifference is symbolized by the fact that President Biden hasn't visited the border and Vice President Kamala Harris, who was nominally put in charge of the problem, only made one

encouraged the surge or feel any efforts to stop it will displease the increasingly vocal leftist/progressive base of their party that wants nothing less than amnesty for illegal immigrants.

Yet if no solution to the larger questions is likely to be found in the next two years, that doesn't absolve Congress, especially the House Republicans who acknowledge there actually is a crisis at the border, from using every weapon at their disposal to bring attention to a challenge that is virtually unprecedented in American history.

■ **What Can Congress Do?**

Moderates may be inclined, as they were in the immediate past Congress, to ignore the security dilemma and simply move to grant a path to citizen-

While illegal border crossings have been a serious problem for decades, it has grown far worse since November 2020.

desultory trip to it and then has rarely commented on it, let alone done anything to ameliorate it.

Any bill strengthening border security – the first and inescapable obligation of the government before any wider consideration immigration should even be considered – will be thwarted by the Democrats in the Senate or by a presidential veto. They have either willingly

ship to people who were brought into the country illegally as children – the so-called "Dreamers" – since few believe they should be deported. But the vast majority of conservatives as well as independents and many border state Democrats understand that anything, however well-meaning, that is done to encourage further illegal immigration, as almost certainly would be the case for

action on the Dreamers, is unacceptable. Amnesty failed in the 1980s when then President Ronald Reagan accepted one in exchange for some more border security. The Democrats' efforts to secure a new, broader amnesty is at the heart of the current crisis.

That means many in the new House majority will want to move on to other issues where some sort of compromise on fiscal matters might theoretically be possible with Biden and the Democrats. But that would be a mistake.

Instead, Republicans have no choice but to use the only mechanism at their disposal to highlight the emergency: impeaching Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas for his acts of nonfeasance in which, acting on the president's orders, he has presided over a situation in which the border is, for all intents and purposes, being erased.

This effort, which will not result in Mayorkas being thrown out of office since the Democratic Senate will never convict him even if the GOP's narrow House majority impeaches him. It will be labeled as grandstanding and a colossal waste of time. But stunts like that will result in hearings in which they can finally bring the various elements of this catastrophe before the public in a way that has not been done before. It is the only option available to those who understand that the consequences of what is happening at the border are so serious that business as usual or playing by the conventional rules of Washington politics simply isn't good enough.

■ **The Evidence**

In October of 2022, approximately 200,000 people were apprehended attempting to enter the United States illegally, with the overwhelming majority of them occurring at the southern border with Mexico. Officials conservatively estimate that an additional 64,000 persons evaded apprehension after entering the country without permission. This was the highest total of such migrants for

any October on record.

That month added to the total of 2.2 million apprehensions for fiscal year 2022. That's up from 1.7 million apprehensions in 2021, with the estimate of the number of those who were not caught being similarly high if not higher. Both these totals are marked increases over the

Republicans have no choice but to use the only mechanism at their disposal to highlight the emergency: impeaching Department of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas...

number of illegals caught during the administration of former President Donald Trump when, before the pandemic hit, some 851,000 were apprehended, although the difference between then and now is that, unlike the policy adopted by his successor, most of those caught were not then released into the United States to await the unlikely prospect of them appearing for court hearings.

Like those that have come in recent years, most are from Central America. A growing number of them are from elsewhere on the globe but made their way to northern Mexico in order to enter the United States. They come at a time when the general perception is that the Biden administration has created a situation in which the border is more or less open for those who wish to enter illegally or for the vast number of economic migrants who are increasingly making largely bogus claims for asylum on the grounds of suffering persecution at home.

But the situation is more than a matter of eye-popping numbers that measure what even *The Washington Post* has described as a new "surge" occurring at the border on Biden's watch.

The flood of migrants is largely being managed by drug cartels who exact fees from those who wish to cross into the country and who they use to help

bring in massive amounts of illegal drugs like fentanyl, which is helping to exacerbate an ongoing American addiction crisis. This has resulted in one of the largest human trafficking schemes in modern history that has helped destabilize both northern Mexico as well as impacting the United States.

Of equal importance is the toll this surge is taking on border communities in the Southwest. They are overwhelmed by the cost and logistical challenge of dealing with so many people crossing into the United States.

That is only likely to get much worse if, failing a last-minute decision from the federal courts, a key measure that has actually kept this crisis from being much worse is lifted.

■ **Title 42**

The Center for Disease Control's so-called "Title 42" order, issued during the coronavirus pandemic, gave federal authorities the right to exclude migrants from the United States and turn them back to Mexico. In spite of the fact that this measure provided the lever by which many of those apprehended at the border were not allowed to stay, the Biden administration has wanted to discard it. But with the courts forcing a decision, the probable end of the order, no matter when it comes, will result in a far greater percentage of those millions who cross into the United States illegally staying.

For the last decade, the standard number for the total of illegal immigrants now in the United States is usually reported by the press as 11 million. But as far back as September 2018, a

Yale University study found that the real number was likely at least twice that if not far higher. After the last two years of surging illegal immigration, it is likely the real number of illegals now exceeds 30 million.

■ **The Border States**

Such a state of affairs explains the dire social welfare situation in border states that has been illustrated by the efforts of Texas Gov. Greg Abbott and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis to send some of those illegals released into the United States to cities like Chicago and New York and in one highly-publicized stunt, the Martha's Vineyard resort. Those are all bastions of liberal support for open borders and amnesty, which had declared themselves "sanctuaries" for illegals where the government would receive no cooperation in seeking to deport them. But their leaders think the problem of caring for these people isn't their responsibility.

Those cities were quick to call for more federal aid to assist them in dealing with the trickle of illegals who wound up on their doorsteps, realizing that, despite their insistence on the right to declare themselves outside the law with respect to immigration, this is a problem only Washington can solve.

One possible avenue of compromise might be to seek increased aid to border communities to help them cope with the cost of, among other services, housing and medical care for the tens of thousands arriving every month. But while that might be kindhearted, anything that makes it easier to live with open rather than closed borders, is part of the problem, not the solution.

■ **Borders Are Not Racist**

It should be specified that opposition to illegal immigration and a belief that stopping it is a political priority is not tantamount to racism or a repudiation of a desire to welcome legal immigrants. While some opponents of immigration often speak of those entering

the United States illegally as being more likely to commit crimes (other than the one, that is, of entering illegally), studies have shown they are no more likely to be criminals than other people. Most simply wish to come to America to better their lives and those of their families. But a situation in which economic migrants aren't required to follow the rules

refusal to finish building the border barrier that Trump began. Their numbers in the Democratic minority have only grown making any effort to put aside the question of comprehensive reform of the immigration system and to concentrate solely on fixing the border a non-starter.

This leaves Republicans no choice but to use their power to hold hearings

...among those caught entering the country have been people who were on the government's terrorist watch list and now are coming from countries outside of Central America...

that legal immigrants observe means the end of the rule of law. That so many are now making unjustified asylum claims when few of them are in genuine fear for their lives at home further illustrates just how easy it is to game the broken system.

Moreover, given the outsized role that criminal organizations that deal in drugs have in organizing the mass crossings into the United States, the question of the motivations of those who make up the tens of millions of illegal immigrants is irrelevant to the debate about whether to secure the border. The fact that among those caught entering the country have been people who were on the government's terrorist watch list and now are coming from countries outside of Central America makes Washington's abandonment of its obligation to maintain control of the border all the more intolerable.

■ **Pushing for Change**

That brings us back to the question of whether House Republicans would be justified in impeaching Mayorkas or otherwise holding proceedings that, while not connected to viable legislation.

In the last Congress, the Democrats' Progressive caucus used its bully pulpit in the House majority to continue to push for amnesty, demonize I.C.E. and the Border Patrol and support Biden's

to draw attention to the problem and either shame Biden into changing his mind and stepping up enforcement efforts or at least set the stage for a future Congress and White House to act.

It can be argued that impeaching an official for following the president's orders and policy choices is unfair even if it does amount to an act of nonfeasance and doesn't constitute a "high crime" or "misdemeanor" that the Constitution says is grounds for impeachment. But, as the Democrats showed in the last two Congresses with their attempts to force Trump from office, impeachment is a political measure, not a court of law.

Whether or not this gambit or any other succeeds in galvanizing the attention of the public at a time when liberal legacy media is still uninterested in the surge of millions of illegals or the plight of border communities, Republicans and Democrats who understand the consequences of further indifference, must do something. The longer Washington waits to cope with this problem, the worse it will get.

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Crime as Psychology, not Circumstance

by **MATT DELISI, JOHN PAUL WRIGHT, and RAFAEL A. MANGUAL**

Among many criminologists, advocates, and policymakers, it is an article of faith that the socioeconomic “root causes” of serious crime must be addressed in order to reduce lawbreaking. However, the enormous crime declines over the course of the late 1990s and early 2000s occurred without significant improvements in socioeconomic conditions. Even so, academics, policymakers, and criminal-justice advocates continue to insist that poverty drives offending rates and that it is thus essential for society to target poverty through increased social and capital investments. This article explores a phenomenon that contradicts that claim – and, in fact, indicates that creating a system with enforced rules and consequences for lawbreaking is key to reducing crime. We call this “crime as entitlement.”

■ **Entitlement**

In psychological literature, “entitlement” is a term that refers to a frame of mind that prioritizes the whims, wants, and needs of the individual above the rights, desires, and needs of others. Entitlement thinking goes beyond normal selfishness because it elevates the belief that one is deserving of special treatment, unearned privileges, and respect – independent of effort. The consequences of entitlement thinking are devastating. Entitlement thinking divorces individuals from personal responsibility; it impedes recognition of the consequences that stem from the individual’s behavior; and it leads the individual to view wants and desires as rights whose pursuit is beyond reproach.

The manifestation of entitlement in individual behavior is common – indeed, nearly universal – across humanity in early childhood, to which anyone who has witnessed a toddler’s temper tantrum can attest. For most of us, entitlement is resolved early in life, as the result of parenting, discipline, and the internalization of behavioral consequences. But for those whose self-absorption and self-centeredness remain unchecked, entitlement metastasizes, which can lead to imprudent and antisocial behavior. Over time, unchecked entitlement can breed arrogant self-indulgence and become foundational to conduct and personality disorders.

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While entitlement does not always present itself in the form of criminal conduct, many criminal offenders – whose offending behavior ranges from disorderly conduct and confidence scheming to sexual predation and homicide – share commonalities in their mind-sets, their behavioral expectations, and their preferred responses to their own behavior. Those mind-sets and expectations, which are expounded below, reveal entitlement as an important, yet underexplored, driver of a significant amount of criminal behavior.

■ **Entitled Criminality**

Entitlement is salient to a host of behavioral disorders affecting children, adolescents, and adults. But, as with most things, the path to entitled criminality begins during childhood.

Perhaps the most aptly named behavioral disorder in children – oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) – is a disruptive behavioral disorder characterized by angry and irritable mood, argumentativeness, defiance, and vindictiveness. Core symptoms of ODD include the active refusal to comply with behavioral requests from authority figures (such as parents and teachers) and the defiant reaction to any attempts to

thwart the child’s behavioral impulses. When an adult, especially a nonparent, confronts a normatively behaved child, the usual response on the part of the child is a manifestation of fear, such as crying, upon being sanctioned. A child with ODD, on the other hand, tends not only to refrain from crying in such situations but will also indignantly challenge the adult. Such challenges stem from the child’s sense of entitlement.

Once on this pathway, some children go on to develop adolescent conduct



A gang enforcement operation, labeled “Operation Washout” in Norfolk Virginia. (Photo: Dave Oney / U.S Marshals).

disorder (CD), a pervasive pattern of violating the rights of others and refusing to conduct oneself in accordance with behavioral norms. Relative to ODD, adolescent CD is a more nefarious disorder infused with aggression and delinquency; but, as with its antecedent condition, an almost-complete disinterest in rules and regulations designed for conventional behavior is central to it. This is because such rules are impediments to the pursuit of one’s behavioral wants.

In adulthood, the developmental progression can culminate in antisocial personality disorder (ASPD), typified by an enduring disregard for, or violation of, the rights of others. ASPD is clinically defined by a “pattern of socially irresponsible, exploitative, and guiltless behavior.” “Symptoms include failure to conform to law, failure to sustain consistent employment, manipulation of others for personal gain, deception of others, and failure to develop stable interpersonal relationships.”

ASPD is relatively rare in the general

population, with prevalence averaging 2-3 percent (2-4 percent in men and 0.5-1 percent in women). Among male prisoners, however, prevalence estimates have ranged from 40-70 percent – an overrepresentation among the inmate population, as compared with the general population that substantially exceeds many of the other disparities that receive the lion’s share of attention in the public discourse about criminal-justice policy.

■ **Entitlement and Criminality**

ASPD is endemic to correctional populations and characterizes the most recalcitrant criminal offenders. Entitlement thinking is deeply intertwined with ASPD and is often expressed through an overhyped sense of self-importance that undergirds the anger that follows the denial of what antisocial offenders believe is their due. On the street and in prison, allegations of “disrespect” often lead to murder and other violent confrontations. Entitlement thinking helps facilitate the rapid devolvement of

what should be trivial encounters – such as one inmate inadvertently bumping into another – into brutally violent ones.

When the expectations of the entitled are violated, they experience distress in the form of dissatisfaction and anger – the latter of which contributes to interpersonal conflict involving aggression and criminal violence. Importantly, the psychological distress of unmet expectations reinforces entitlement. As a result, highly entitled individuals are intransigent in their belief in their own superiority and what, to their minds, ought to flow to them on that basis. This phenomenon is put on display by offenders who view contact with the criminal-justice system as an affront to their right to live as they see fit, further feeding their sense of indignation and perception of society as unjust.

Consider the following examples of the manifestation of entitlement in serious crime.

- In Colorado in May 2020, police arrested Kelvin Watson for attempted

first-degree murder for shooting a cook at a Waffle House restaurant who told Watson that he would have to wear a mask. Indignant about the mask regulation, and not wanting to wear one, Watson simply shot the victim, outraged that the worker would tell him otherwise.

consistently elided by the news media, which often portray the former as freedom fighters justifiably raging against oppressive social structures. Former Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake, told constituents that she “gave those who wished to destroy space to do that,” during the unrest that followed the

percent of state prisoners and 63 percent of sentenced jail inmates met the diagnostic criteria for drug abuse or dependence. Many of these offenders reported using drugs at the time of the offense for which they were incarcerated. Despite the association between drug use and crime, the decriminalization of drug offenses has prevailed in recent years as the popular approach to the problems associated with drug abuse.

Drug abuse can initiate a cascade of behavioral problems, the downstream effects of which increase the likelihood of homelessness. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development estimates that 50 percent of homeless individuals in the U.S. have a substance use disorder. As a result, major cities across the country now have sizable public spaces in which street persons openly sell and consume illicit drugs, ranging from crack cocaine to heroin. These open violations of behavioral norms are often met with a hands-off approach on the part of policymakers – an approach informed by the rhetoric of activists, who have successfully recast the enforcement of laws against sidewalk encampments and drug use as mistreatment of those who cannot help themselves. In a clinical setting, this would constitute the sort of enabling that would be expected to feed the patient’s sense of entitlement.

Enabling of criminal entitlement is now woven into politically progressive enclaves, where criminal-justice policy debates are driven in significant part by concerns for the harms that enforcement can inflict on offenders.

- After his 140th arrest, Charles Barry thanked Democratic legislators in New York for their bail reform legislation, a policy producing almost immediate release of arrestees, including career criminals. Barry referred to the reform as “lit” because it effectively allowed him to commit crime with impunity.

- Decades ago, when asked why he perpetrated so many sexual homicides, the loquacious serial murderer Ted Bundy quipped, “There are just so many people,” implying that the population was sufficiently large that he should be able to do what he wanted to it.

- In preparation for their mass murder at Columbine High School in 1999, murderer Eric Harris glibly asked his co-perpetrator, Dylan Klebold, “Isn’t it fun to get the respect that we’re going to deserve?”

death of Freddie Gray in police custody.

The increasingly common political responses to two interrelated social problems – drug abuse and homelessness – further exemplify society’s reinforcement of entitlement thinking. Much like the behavioral disorders discussed above, drug use is far less prevalent in the general population than it is in correctional settings – even when you exclude those incarcerated primarily for drug-related offenses.

The prevalence of entitlement among criminal offenders is almost certainly a major contributor to the failure of so many correctional interventions to reduce recidivism.

■ Societal Reinforcement

Since the 1960s, public policy, as well as the broader cultural *zeitgeist*, has reinforced entitlement thinking. For example, in recent years during episodes of social unrest, the distinction between rioters and mere protesters has been

Data from the National Survey of Drug Use and Health indicate that 79.2 percent of Americans over the age of 12 have never used an illicit drug. A Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) report, using data from 2007–09, found that 58

Enabling of criminal entitlement is now woven into progressive enclaves, where criminal-justice policy debates are driven in significant part by concerns for the harms that enforcement can inflict on offenders. In a recent

report on rioting issued by the Major Cities Chiefs Association, over half of the police departments in America's largest cities reported that local district attorneys often refused to prosecute arrested protesters – even when video evidence of their criminal conduct was available. Portland, Oregon, for example, only prosecuted 144 individuals out of 1,028 cases, according to the report. Progressive prosecutors in New York City, Philadelphia, and San Francisco simply refused to prosecute many of those arrested. Even in Dallas, a progressive prosecutor dismissed more than 600 cases after a night of violent rioting.

The removal of criminal consequences – from failing to prosecute offenders, to eliminating bail and pre-trial detention, to decarceration, to defunding the police – has likely affected the criminal calculations of offenders. Suffused with entitlement, progressive reforms take the coddling of offenders to another level. Active criminals, for example, often have intimate knowledge of the inner workings of their local justice system. They know officers, prosecutors, and judges by name, are often aware of the shifts worked by police, and know the likely sanctions if caught. For many, progressive criminal-justice reform is a green light to act out their predations.

■ **Policy Implications**

Those seeking to craft interventions through public policymaking must reorient their approaches around an understanding of entitlement as one of the single most important “root causes” of crime – one that cannot be treated by financial benevolence from the state.

The prevalence of entitlement among criminal offenders is almost certainly a major contributor to the failure of so many correctional interventions to reduce recidivism. The data on recidivism in the U.S. are revealing: a 2018 BJS report tracked a sample of 400,000 offenders released from prisons across 30 states in 2005 and found that 83 percent – five out of every six – had been

rearrested at least once by 2014. On average, the released prisoners tracked generated five arrests each over the nine-year observation period.

A massive infrastructure of politicians, policymakers, academics, and, at times, even criminal-justice practitioners, similarly behave as if criminals are justified to commit crimes...

Entitlement is a core feature of the Psychological Inventory of Criminal Thinking Styles (PICTS), which is used for the risk assessment of inmates in the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Research shows entitlement to be among the strongest criminal thinking tendencies associated with repeat offending; and repeat offenders are (and long have been) key drivers of serious crime in the United States. According to a BJS study, almost 40 percent of the violent felons convicted in America's 75 largest counties over the 12-year period of 1990–2002 had an active criminal-justice status at the time of their arrest.

Ultimately, the underappreciation of the role that entitlement thinking plays in crime has three important policy implications:

- First, it runs the risk of leading far too many scholars, public intellectuals, and policymakers to approach crime policy from the assumption that the main driver of criminality (especially violent criminality) is economic deprivation.
- Second, it risks feeding an overestimation of society's capacity to develop and deploy workable and sustainable interventions to the psychological underpinnings of criminal offending.
- These two implications lead to the third, which is that to the extent that entitlement is deeply ingrained in criminal offenders, incapacitation and deterrence will continue to be ends best served by state sanctions for criminal conduct,

as well as the most effective means by which society can hope to minimize the exposure of vulnerable individuals to criminal victimization.

■ **Conclusion**

Entitlement pervades contemporary narratives about criminal behavior and responses to it. It is not just that antisocial individuals feel entitled to perpetrate any behavior they wish, including violent felonies. A massive infrastructure of politicians, policymakers, academics, and, at times, even criminal justice practitioners, similarly behave as if criminals are justified to commit crimes – and as if responding to those crimes in a legal, lawful, enforcement capacity is itself wrongheaded.

While many decision makers may be motivated by an admirable sense of compassion, it is imperative that they understand that this sympathy is misplaced and that rules, deterrence, and enforced consequences are necessary to curb criminals and protect the innocent.

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If Not Us, Who; If Not Now, When?

review by SHOSHANA BRYEN

“Indispensable” should not be confused with correct – or capable. An “indispensable nation” should never be confused with a country that always does the right thing or does it well. That said, Robert Lieber’s *Indispensable Nation* is probably an indispensable book.

First, the downside. Published early in 2022, it misses the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the Iranian provision of drones to the Russian military. While that is inevitable, it makes the conversation about Russian behavior – and Iranian behavior – stale. Russia has now committed what appear to be war crimes in Ukraine by attacking civilians and civilian infrastructure with Iranian drones. It appears not to have done that in Georgia or the 2014 Crimea land-grab, but likely did in both Chechen wars.

There is a great upside. Lieber is emeritus professor of government and international affairs at Georgetown University. He has written prolifically about U.S. foreign policy and has advised the State Department, the drafters of U.S. National Intelligence Estimates, and political campaigns. He knows a lot.

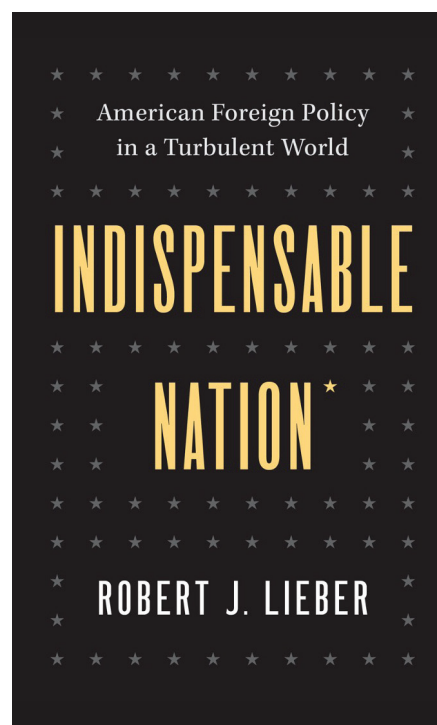
Go to the big question. If a nation is, in fact, “indispensable,” what is the thing to which it is indispensable? World peace? The maintenance of a “rules based order?” Treaties and contracts?

Lieber is firmly wedded to treaties, pacts, and agreements, and has a bias against leaving them regardless of their lack of utility or obsolescence, or

the cheating of the other parties. Paris Climate Pact, anyone? The 2015 Iran nuclear deal? Open Skies Treaty? On the other hand, he is skeptical of both ends of the current American political spectrum, both those who would withdraw America from the world stage and those who would go bigger and broader. He is also skeptical of what comes between the ends, particularly those who would “share” the world stage with Russia, China, and regionally with Iran. Values matter.

He dissects the candidates for the title of “indispensable nation,” the United States, Europe (more than a notion but not a nation), Russia, and China. The chapter on Europe is worth the price of the book. European giddiness over the election of Barack Obama and disdain for Donald Trump were clearly more on their minds than freedom of navigation or limits on nuclear capability for rogue nations. His own disdain for Germany is evident as he writes, “Sanctimonious commitment to international institutions, an inclination to tell others what to do, and a propensity to insist on peaceful conflict resolution even in circumstances where there is no hope of peace.”

The China chapter is terrific. An overview of how America’s misunderstanding of China’s long-term plans was exacerbated by underestimating just how long those terms were. It was one thing for the Nixon administration to believe an opening to China was appropriate. Even Bill Clinton’s determination to bring China into the WTO was understandable.



But those who promoted the wholesale sale and transfer of American technology and production capability clearly saw no downside. China has moved openly to capture international institutions, American college campuses, trade routes through the Middle East and Africa, control the mines producing the raw materials necessary for everything from computer chips to electric cars to solar panels. The influx of money led to the repression of Hong Kong, threats not only to Taiwan but to other American allies including Japan, South Korea, and the Philippines, along with the repression of its own people. And left the rest of the world unable to learn much about the origins of the COVID pandemic in a timely way. Chinese disinformation campaigns are well covered.

The Russia section suffers a bit from being written before the invasion of Ukraine in 2022, when some people might have thought there was a reasonable case to be made for not having a single superpower – not having the U.S. and its allies be responsible for the Global Commons. Lieber cites Graham Allison of Harvard’s Kennedy School, who wrote in *Foreign Affairs*, 2020:

At a time when Washington identifies “a new era of great power competition,” and with China and Russia both asserting their power, America should accommodate itself to a spheres-of-influence policy, in which great powers “demand deference from other states in their own regions or exert predominant control there.”

And Robert Zoellick wrote in *The Wall Street Journal* in April 2020, before the scope of the pandemic – and China’s culpability – were fully understood:

China has decided to combine recovery at home with advocating for a world community of shared interests’



President Donald Trump addresses the 73rd session of the U.N. General Assembly in New York. (Photo: White House / Joyce N. Boghosian)

with “the underlying aim of promoting ‘globalization with Chinese characteristics.’”

Had American leadership been paying attention to history and the Russian movement to recapture “Russian territory” on its borders, Ukraine would have been less of a surprise. Russia is, to Lieber, a “revisionist power,” looking for the restoration of its empire. Our Western belief that Russian investments in its military over the past 20 years had produced a conventional Russian army/air force that would threaten NATO, however, has been smashed by Russian inability to bring a serious force to bear in Ukraine. On the other hand, failure has pushed Russia to a campaign of attacks on civilians and civilian infrastructure that should be investigated as war crimes.

However, having found common cause with China in the United Nations, two of the five Permanent Seats on the Security Council, Russia has been successful in blocking criticism of Moscow

or Beijing. The UN has proven itself entirely unable to deal with depredations committed by a Security Council member (it skipped over Beijing’s repression of Hong Kong and the Uyghur genocide for the same reason).

Lieber himself, even without the benefit of hindsight, wisely notes that “the revisionist powers might have other priorities than living in harmony with America.” He argues against spheres of influence, noting that this has at least as much chance of pulling America into unwanted wars as preventing them. Our friends in the Pacific, for example, may be unwilling to lie down under China’s boot, and Europe and the Middle East have had a taste of Russia and don’t like it.

So, if not Europe and not China or Russia, then who. Or what?

Lieber points to:

[A] familiar list of shared global problems, including nuclear proliferation and arms control, terrorism, climate change, financial

crises, rules and norms for international trade, refugees, human rights and the rule of law. Each of those problems calls for a collective response to what is a mostly shared challenge, but there exists no global government to resolve them.

Not only no global government (thank goodness) but perhaps too much reliance on the enforcement of treaties and laws to prod the recalcitrant into obeying the will of the “world.” Russia and Iran cheated on nuclear proliferation and terrorism, China and India among lots and lots of others, cheated on pollution goals and climate change. America’s southern neighbors subvert the very principle of borders – Mexico transports thousands of migrants, not to mention drugs, through its own country ignoring its own laws to shove them over the border into ours. Immigration laws in Europe? A joke. Human rights and rule of law? Worse.

Lieber slams President Donald Trump for withdrawing from a series of treaties/pacts but if we were the only ones abiding by them, or others were actively subverting them, he has to make a better case for staying in. He does, in fact, acknowledge the shortcomings of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran.

The back end of the book is, generally, comforting. America is not “in decline,” despite reports from people who think it is or want it to be. The conditions of 1945 were bound to change, but the U.S. has changed as well. And the great advances in technology and trade made by China in the past 40 years are being undermined by the aging and declining Chinese population plus the increasing repression of those with new, better or different ideas. Although Lieber didn’t know it, Russia is over and Iran is facing a rebellion it cannot seem to contain.

But how good are we?

Here is the best part: there is a discussion to be had as to whether the U.S.

is any better than Russia or China or Iran. People in our own country routinely trot out the slave trade and Indian wars to suggest that we are in fact no better than the Nazis, the Communists, or the mullahs. They talk about “regime change” and “democracy promotion,” and the American overthrow of the governments of Iraq, Libya, and Egypt. Have this discussion with your friends – or better, with your adult children.

Lieber himself, even without the benefit of hindsight, wisely notes that “the revisionist powers might have other priorities than living in harmony with America.”

First, going back centuries doesn’t seem useful if it is limited to the United States of America. All of the world engaged in slave trade and not all of it was a) from Africa or b) conducted by white people against black people. See *Victory in Tripoli* by Joshua London (reviewed by *inFOCUS* Quarterly, Fall 2019) for a look at Muslim Berbers kidnapping both black Africans and white Christians. EtymologyOnline traces the word “slave” to the Old French *esclave* (13th century) “from Medieval Latin *Sclavus* ‘slave’ ... originally ‘Slav’ – so used in this sense because of the many Slavs sold into slavery by conquering peoples.”

The entire continent of South America plus parts of the Caribbean speaks Spanish or Portuguese because it was raped by the Spanish and Portuguese. Dutch and English are there, too, courtesy of conquerors. China and Japan were slave holding

conquerors in Asia. Is the past disqualifying in the present? Ask the successors to Nazi Germany. There has to be room for growth.

Second, agreeing that the U.S.-led “Arab Spring” was a disaster for many people of the region, what was the intention? What did the U.S. seek? What does China seek in Xinjiang Province? What does Iran seek in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, and Yemen? So, yes. The at-

tempted export of democracy and freedom for the people of the region ran headlong into a culture that we didn’t understand; our mistakes were legion – but not venal.

We are, in fact, different.

The end is slightly disappointing. Lieber’s conclusion is for the U.S. to engage its friends, reinvigorate pacts, treaties, and international organizations – he is oddly OK with the UN under some circumstances, but not the JCPOA – and then back them up with military force equal to the job. He doesn’t mention cost. Writing early in the Biden administration, he hopes Biden can do it all, but in 2023, that seems out of touch.

But still – definitely buy it, read it, discuss it.

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■ *A Final Thought ...*

Undermining Israel

There are several reasons Palestinian terror attacks have increased to a level not seen in Israel in recent years, but they are traceable to a single source: the Biden administration.

This administration has encouraged the Palestinian Authority to believe in the “two-state solution.” To believe that the P.A. will pay no price for inciting terror and paying salaries to terrorists who kill Israelis. To believe that the bipartisan Taylor Force Act is dead and American money will be forthcoming no matter what. To believe the administration is committed to putting a Palestinian embassy in Israel’s capital, Jerusalem. To believe that a special American envoy will be their ambassador. To believe that no matter what P.A. does or says, the Americans won’t complain.

And the Palestinians are right to believe all of this.

At the same time, the administration is attacking Israel by upgrading Israel’s enemies, undermining its ability to defend itself, and calling its democratic bona fides into question.

First, the administration called the Abraham Accords “normalization agreements,” rather than the historic peace accords they are. But that was minor compared to the gifts Israel’s chief nemesis Iran received. The administration

lifted sanctions on Iran’s proxy terror organization, the Houthis, and waived sanctions to allow Iran to sell more oil to China. A maritime gas agreement pushed on Israel’s outgoing government by Washington will be a financial boon for Hezbollah, Iran’s proxy in Lebanon

The deal provided Israel only with unspecified “royalties” to be paid by a third party, and American “security assurances.” This undermines Israel’s decades-long policy that it would “defend itself by itself” and not ask the U.S. to provide American soldiers for its security.

The administration also undermined Israel’s position as a democratic ally by announcing the opening of a new FBI investigation into the battlefield death of an *Al Jazeera* journalist, having previously accepted the findings of Israeli and Palestinian investigations and declaring the case closed. The PA cheered and demanded that the case go to the International Criminal Court.

Oddly, U.S. Ambassador Thomas Nides and President Joe Biden later said they had no idea such an investigation had been ordered by the US Attorney General. Really?

President Biden didn’t know?